



by Ahmed Khani (1650-1707)

Translated by Salah Saadalla

Title: Mem and Zin
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Cover Designer: Genco Demirer
Designer: Avraz Hussein (With the help of Spirez)
First issue: 2008
No of copies: 1500
Printing preparations by Avesta

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Biographical Notes



- Born in Zakho on the 15/10/1930,
educated there , in Mosul in England
- Developed an early interest in literature
and culture generally.
- At the secondary School in Mosul,
he was president of the Debating Society,
editor of its wall-magazine Al-Hayat Life,
started publishing with a short story entitled
The Lottery Ticket, which won the first
prize in a competition
carried out among Mosul students.

Writing in Arabic, Kurdish and English
Has written several books

In English

- Kurdistan divided Nation of the Middle East
By S. S. Gavan, 1958, London

In Arabic

- Notes on the Kurdish Language
- The Kurdish Question in Iraq
- The Kurdish Question in Turket
- The Kurdish Question In Syria

Ferhenga Selahedin

English-Kurdish Dictionary

Arabic and Latin characters

Translated from English to Kurdish

- The Diplomat, James Aldridge, 1984
- The Snows of Kilimandjaro, Hemingway, 2007
- They came to Baghdad Agatha Christie, 2007

Translated from English to Arabic

- The March of the Ten Thousand,
Rex Warner - Xenephons'
- The Snows of Kilimanjaro, Hemingway
- The Essential Tension, Thomas Khun
- The Three Worlds, Culture and World Developm
Peter Worsley (In association with a colleague)

Translated from Arabic to Kurdish

- The Epic of Gilgamesh
- Published numerous articles, broadcasts and ga
T.V. Interviews on Kurdish cultural matters.
- Former President of the
Kurdish Cultural Society In Kirkuk
- Member of Iraqi Writers Union
- Member of Committee of experts colning
Kurdish Scientific terms In the
Kurdish Commission of the Iraqi Scientific Academ
- An Engineer by profession
- Died on 18/10/2007 In Hawler (Arbil) Kurdistan
- Buried In Zakho,his home town.

MEM and ZIN

by

**Ahmed Khani
(1650 - 1707)**

Translated by
Salah Saadalla

**The publication of this book was made possible
thanks to the generous support given by His
Excellency Mr Nechirvan Barzani Prime
Minister of Kurdistan Regional Government.**

**The translation is direct from Kurdish, complete and
unabridged.**

Table of Content

Dedication	7
Preface	9
1. In praise of God	15
2. Appealing and pleading to God	18
3. In praise of the Prophet	22
4. Asking the Prophet for supplication and begging God for forgiveness	27
5. Our plight	29
6. Why this book is written in Kurdish	33
7. Cupbearer ! Pour wine into the glass	37
8. In praise of the Prince of Botan and his two sisters: Siti and Zin	42
9. Beauty and Love	47
10. News of Mem and Tajdin	48
11. Celebrating Newroz and the New Year	51
12. City folks go out to celebrate the New Year	55
13. The Prince calls on the youth to celebrate Newroz	56
14. Mem and Tajdin come across Siti and Zin	57
15. Mem and Tajdin grapple with the problem	62
16. Siti and Zin return from New Year celebration and relate their experiences to their granny	67
17. The granny notices the rings belonging to Mem and Tajdin	73
18. The granny goes to the fortune-teller	76
19. The fortune-teller performs the task	77
20. The Granny talks to Mem and Tajdin	81
21. The Granny returns to Siti and Zin	83
22. The Prince gives away Siti to Tajdin	86
23. Siti and Tajdin wedding feast	93
24. Tajdin's and Siti's candles burn	101
25. The meeting of the bride and the bride-groom	104
26. Bekir incites the Prince against Mem and Tajdin	108
27. Zin in love	114
28. Zin addresses the sorrow	118
29. Zin reproaches Siti	119
30. Zin addresses the candle	120

31. Zin talks to the moth	121
32. Mem's misery	123
33. Mem addresses the Tigris River	125
34. Mem addresses the wind	127
35. Mem reproaches his heart	129
36. The Prince goes to hunt	133
37. The garden of the Prince	136
38. Zin goes to the Garden	137
39. Mem too goes to the garden	141
40. The Prince returns from the hunt and surprises Mem and Zin	149
41. To save Mem and Zin, Tajdin sets his house on fire	154
42. Bekir complains to the prince about Mem and Zin	157
43. The chess tournament	161
44. Mem in the prison	168
45. Zin loses hope and blames the orbit	172
46. Tajdin and his brothers discuss how to free Mem	175
47. Tajdin sends a word to the prince demanding the release of Mem	178
48. Bekir is afraid and draws another plot	180
49. Bekir shows the Prince a way out	183
50. The Prince permits Zin to see Mem : Zin muses sadly	186
51. Zin makes her will	193
52. Zin visits Mem	200
53. Mem's fate	205
54. Mem is mourned and Bekir is killed	211
55. Zin speaks well of Bekir	217
56. Zin's destiny	221
57. Each grass has its own odour	227
58. The end of the story	229
59. True love	233
60. A dream or an image ?	236
61. Epilogue and musing with the pen	243
Notes	247
Salah Saadalla Biographical Notes	251
Acknowledgement	253

♦ TO MY SON "AZAD"

Preface

Late in 1987, I was asked by a Publisher if I thought there was a suitable literary work, representing the cultural heritage of the Kurdish people, worthy of translation to English. Unhesitatingly, I said Mem and Zin, adding that it is the Book of the Kurds, based on the epic folk tale Mem Alan that Khani has immortalised in a rich, classical and highly popular poetical story. To my surprise, I was asked there and then, to translate it. Though I welcomed the idea, I was non-committal, knowing the difficult task ahead. A few days later, the publisher and I met by chance, and I was reminded of the proposal. With some apprehension, I accepted, and we set a period of six months as a target to complete the work. It took me, in fact, eight months. It has been a very trying work indeed.

The main difficulty was the lack of a credible Kurdish-English dictionary. The book also contains hundreds of Turkish (court language), Persian (cultural fashion) and Arabic words (Khani was an Islamic scholar). Sometimes, there are entire sentences in these languages.

I began by arranging the Arabic words in a little Arabic-English dictionary for easy reference, then I managed to obtain an old Turkish-English dictionary which was quite useful as the edition I chose for translation was Bozarsalan's, in the Latin alphabet, published in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1968, with its Turkish translation on the opposite pages. Comparing the Kurdish and Turkish words, and referring to the dictionary helped to define some meanings, more reliably.

Fortunately, Bozarsalan has also attached a little Persian-Kurdish, Kurdish-Kurdish, Kurdish-Turkish glossarz to his edition. This too was useful. Some omitted lines, probably censored in pages 52, 54, 56 and 58 of Bozarsalan's edition, were filled in from Khurhid Lachin's copy, hand-written in 1905.

Still, the difficulty remained, for the very themes of Mem and Zin are complicated. True, the main theme, the plot is love, real and divine. But the poetical story is more than a tragic Romeo and Juliet and Ahmed Khani is perhaps more complicated than William Shakespeare, at least as a thinker. The pages of the book are full of thoughts, often dominated by philosophy, particularly sufism, in which shades of meanings, double-meanings, metaphors, and symbolic expressions, play a major role, and require extra care in interpreting.

There are many variations on the theme. Linguistically, words and sentences may be translated in different ways, rendering acceptable meanings. However, there is only one meaning or an idea Khani always intended to convey, a meaning, an idea he wanted the reader to grasp, because he wrote for that purpose in the first place. And that is the meaning or the idea one has to catch and present.

Khani so repeatedly calls on the cupbearer to pour wine... that one may think that here is another romantic Omar Khayyam desiring an extra drink to forget it all as life is meaningless all ! Yet one could safely wager that the intensely pious Khani never touched wine in his life, that he was merely after the divine inspiration. Ahmed Khani was born in 165 A.D. (as he has recorded in the book), in a village called Khan - hence his name - in the Hakari province of Kurdistan (in the south-east Turkey now), and died at Bayazid, most probably in 1707, as most scholars agree.

He completed the book at the prime age of 44 (again as he has recorded). In addition to *Mem and Zin*, he wrote two more books *the New Spring of Children*, a text book, in the form of a dictionary for teaching Kurdish children, and *the Belief of the Faith*.

Apart from these documented facts, nothing else is known, for certain, of Khani's life. However, it is logical to conclude that he lived for sometime in Jizir¹, the capital of the principality of Botan, where the events of the story take place. This is deduced from the matter of fact description of the geography of the city.

1- Now 'Cizre', the « Ç » is pronounced « J » as in « James ».

Botan is often considered as the cradle of the Kurdish nation. Following the two-way partition of Kurdistan, between the Ottoman and the Persian empires, as a result of the Battle of Chaldiran in 1514, the process of the natural development of the Kurdish principalities into a unified central state was halted. Furthermore, as the central authority of the two empires expanded, Kurdish principalities fell one after another. The last principality was none other than Botan. It was the most advanced, socially, economically and politically. It was also the most powerful, and the nearest political entity the Kurdish people have ever had, to a central state ; its authority extended to vast areas of Kurdistan, assuming geographically and politically a national character. Here then was the Kurdish Renaissance in which Khani played a leading intellectual role, proceeding to establish a Kurdish school of literature and presenting at the same time a comprehensive social and political programme aimed at ensuring the freedom and unity of Kurdistan and the building of a just society, in order, as he put it, to complete the religion and the State, and acquire learning and wisdom. Hence, the Kurds consider Khani not only as their greatest poet but also as their unrivalled pioneer of the Kurdish national ideology, who formulated clearly its goals and defined the means to attain them.

In the process, Khani advanced some striking contemporary themes. He writes, for instance, (though of course in an elementary form), on the theme of the existence of the opposing elements in nature, the contradiction between the opposites, the pauperisation, the gradual quantitative change affecting a qualitative change. He writes even on the Machiavellian practice in government. All this in a love story !

But above all, Khani was calling on his beloved country to cry for freedom, justice and learning and fight for unity. No wonder the people of Kurdistan venerate him to an extent that his grave has become a shrine. His ideals still live on in the hearts and minds of the people of Kurdistan , the picturesque and oil-rich mountainous middle eastern country, which was re-divided, now four way, as a result of the First World War, between two new states, namely Iraq and Syria, and two old ones, namely Turkey and Iran.

The people of Kurdistan (numbering 20 millions) have been waging a desperate struggle for survival as a nation, and the Kurdish National Liberation movement has achieved the distinction of being the oldest and the bitterest in the world.

The national oppression to which the Kurds have been subjected to has been so savage, that often it has taken genocidal dimensions. Understandably, Khani's protesting words in the Prologue on the plight of his people, the Orphans of the World, have echoed across the dark years

*I wonder at the wisdom of the Lord
The Kurds in the State of the World
For what reason is their deprivation
For what purpose is their condemnation.*

Khani may have realised the novelty of his revolutionary ideas, thus at the end of the book he modestly and apologetically calls himself a vanguard sinner. One should more appropriately replace the sinner with the Rebel, as he was indeed a daring, albeit critic, of the Prince. He has taken his rightful place as one of the towering figures of the East.

This translation is almost literal ; it may also be unique, as it is, to my knowledge, the first to be undertaken by a Kurd, someone who is close to Khani's tongue (and region too, my town Zakho is a mere 50 kilometres away from his Jizir). My aim has been to capture the correct meaning and present it faithfully and hopefully, in fluent English, keeping as much as possible the original Kurdish flavour. Needless to say any remote resemblance of some verses to poetry is quite incidental.

I should make it clear that the title of the book, namely Mem and Zin is usually written Mem û Zin in Kurdish but is pronounced as Memozin and sometimes it is so written. The e in Mem is pronounced as ê in Mecca and the i in Zin is pronounced as double ee in teen.

Finally Khani's name is sometimes pronounced as Khanê, the ê as e in bed. Since the name of Khani's mother is not known for sure it is probable that her name was Khanê a common Kurdish female name, so I am inclined to guess that Khanê was the name of the mother of the great writer and that he was named after his mother i.e. as Ahmed, son of Khanê. It is merely a guess, but I have often heard this kind of nomenclature in Kurdish.

Salah Saadalla

MEM AND ZIN

1. In praise of God

In the pre-written book is the name of God
Without his name, it is incomplete, by God

O, prelude to the beauty of loving
The true and metaphoric beloved

It is your name that is the tablet of the name of love
It is your name that is the inscription of the pen of love

Without your inscription, the pen's inscription is tame
Without your name, incomplete is the name

It is your name that reigns in the intended house
And forms the index of the praiseworthy correspondence

The content of the doubtless writings
The witness of the unseen openings

Beloved in the hearts of those having hearts
The hearts that summon to yourself

Beloved you are, proud and tender
Lover you are, yet without desire

Absolutely, you are the beneficial and the benefit
Undoubtedly, the desiring and the desire !

You are the light on the face of the lover
You are the fire in the heart of the poor lover !

A candle you are, though not of light and fire
A sun you are, yet unseen by the eye

A treasure you are within the world's talisman
A buried treasure seen by the mind of man

This world and man and all the visible
This possible and all the beings existing

All depend on you for economy and management
The abundant meadow of creation and commandment

By your command, through the word be, two worlds
Came to exist, and the purpose was man

The man himself is one of the two
One letter of the command be, so he came to be

That letter is the truth, a certain
A command, with your power, also a creation

The body is drawn of humanity
The soul is endowed with divinity

This body and soul by compulsion and coercion
Have been at God's command, in co-habitation

If Humanity were without dignity
Divinity is still a ray of beauty

The letter which we said was a tiny inscription
Might have a deep meaning and intention

Outwardly it might look as minor
Inwardly it is the pen's major inscription

In it exist the testimonial and divination
In it manifest : the mastery and defection

Man himself is but a darkness and also a light
As Adam is so close to you, yet so far

Much as he is of the worldly species
He is but a part of the human kind

This way the orbits² are all exalted
This much the angels all are extolled

This great workshop that is turning
The magnificent headquarters that is moving

2- *The orbit : fate, destiny.*

This much the earth with the elements
This way the incidental with the substantial

This much the precious and the blessing
This way the food and the clothing

This much claimed and required
This way beloved and desired

Animals, minerals and plants
Intentions, desires and requirements

In the whole they are in action for us
In the whole, they are useful for us

Truly, this order and brilliance
Rightly you arranged for us, so nice

But we the unaware, the idle and the sinner
Still are shackled in the soul that is the incitor

With no thoughts in our hearts and recollection
Our tongues do not utter any thanks and commendation

Khani has no heart that is recollecting
O, Lord ! Give him a tongue that is thanking

2. Appealing and pleading to God

Thanking you is the essence of the time !
Citing you is the polish of the heart !

O, the unpartnered and unique one
O, the unparalleled and peerless Finder !

O, the permanent unvanishing and everlasting
O, the unperishing and rising leader !

O, creator of the earth and heaven
O, creator of all mankind and jinn

Realms, angels and orbits, entirely
En masse you made, divinely

Praise be to you, whatever you created
Finely you did, however you fissioned

Anything you made, O, good worker
Everything in its sphere, was proper

These nine shells that are full of pearls
The white, transparent and dark pearls

The seven which resemble the pearls of Kheltan
The six places and the four corners

The three boys, full of offsprings
The earth and heaven, together with the keys

The board and pen, the stationary stars and the Throne
The animal, plant, mineral and the bed

You produced these many works
You created these many marvels

Every thing you created from nothing
Everything without essence you invented

In the whole, be it the first or the last
To sum, be it believer or infidel

For you everyone is an aspect !
In them you become a facet !

Without your grace they have no existence !
Without your light, they have no sight !

The wisdom is that both concealed and apparent !
The power is that both absent and present !

Neither a space you have nor a place
Yet in those you are dwelling

As if all were one body, you are the soul !
As if all were one city, you are the house !

It is your grace that is the ornament of the lovers !
It is your envy that is the jealousy of the watchers !

It is your inclination that attracts the lovers !
It is your malady that aches the hearts !

Shirin³ you made as sugar for Perwiz
Ferhad shed blood as tears

Layla you made an affliction for Qays
Ramin you entangled with Ways

Why did you show Yousif to Zulaikha ?
How did you lead Wamik to Ezra

The Sheikh⁴, who was old and pious
You maddened for the daughter of the impious

Nilufer the tender flower !
That too you made a lover !

You burdened them with affliction
You shackled them with misfortune

Nightingales you turned into giddy lovers !
Red-roses you created from thorns !

3- Shirin and Perwiz, Ferhad, Layla and Qays, Ramin and Ways, Yousif and Zulaikha, Wamik and Ezra famous lovers.

4- Sanaani : the Pious who fell in love with the daughter of the King of Armenia.

You gave fine colours to the grass of red flowers
You gave a fine voice to the singing of nightingales

You gave the candle tip the light
Plundering the moth with a light so bright

The beloved you made so attractive !
The attracted you made so perplexed !

This love and affection in the heart
This ear-lock⁵ and the shoulder plait

I wonder, did you not make them opposite
Everyone you equated with another

The mirror you made, repeated
Your grace in them, illustrated

The mirror you held before the parrot
A net you held before the deer

A mirror they think is water
A reflection they imagine is the sunshine

They see your picture in the water
They do not avoid the net and the water

Lip-dry they demand fresh water
But ear-lock and mole are the bait instead

Once the desired is around
All onlookers will go round

The parrots themselves what are they doing ?
Anything they hear they are echoing

They see the intention, in short
Shackled they become, staying long

Heart desire and desired you are the King !
And you guide whom you take under your wing !

Anyone you wish to entangle
With the ear-lock and mole you shackle

5- Ear-lock, side lock, mole : are esteemed as beauty symbols in Kurdistan.

Anyone you bring into the faith
Support, and put under your care

Presently you take the place known
If a servant, you turn, into a master

Without bowing, you honourable idol
Made Adam a prayer niche and lord

How did you take Jesus to the summit
Whatever with you endeared that soul ?

The lesson that you secretly read to Idris
Definitely it had the measure of sanctification

The poor and the guiltless Ibliss⁶
He had so much of your solicitude

He submitted a thousand times a day
So you allowed him to have his way

Not bowing to anybody, except his Idol
Rejecting your replacement as idle

He did not bow once before an outsider
Your sorrow, put him forever in fire

In short aware of your wisdom
No one we saw, glory be to God

Seeker of knowledge, and understanding, too
Saying of you « we do not know you »

Khani's ignorance of right
May alienate him, as right

Unless God save him
Or Mustafa guides him⁷

O, Lord ! For Mustafa's sake
Khani as your acquaintance make

6- *Iblis Satan.*

7- *Mustapha : Mohammed.*

3. In praise of the Prophet

Things boasting evidence and proof
Amount to nil unless possible and necessary

Necessity is one, the essence of the lord
Possibility is many, the sum total of the others

The necessity making the possible a veil
And for Himself he made the possible an aspect

Thus in order to have this proven
For his grace to come out and not be hidden

The treasure of the jewels to be exhibited
Establishing the painter from the painting

But the skill of the wise author
The painting by the able and the omnipotent

Ruled out only having a drawing
Eminently he would also have a writing

Since any being had no inscription
The pen was the first to come into creation

It was the first⁸, then the soul and the mind
These three were unlike the previous ones

But, that is not to distinguish between them
Better yet consider them the same

Say « They are absolutely one thing
As numbers and numerals considering

First a light shined from the eternal grace
A light becoming Mohammed's essence

That light by the command of the Knower of the Invisible
Became an abundant source of the world invisible

From the meaning of the Prophet all souls
Became like the tree and the grass

8- *the first : the pen.*

Becoming the original source of all souls
The happy souls and the unfortunate souls

All branched out from him
All attained felicity through him

There was neither earth nor the heavens
He was the chief of all prophets

The orbits were created for him⁹
The bowing of the angels was initiated for him

He was a mercy to the whole world
Adam was still coagulating as water and mud

He was the Prophet of the sum, part and all
While Adam as yet was water and soil

That window of beauty of the Creator
And the dark heart's sun orbiter

When he took up the worldly form
As the Prophet of the end of time

That strait between the possible and the necessary
That king in the shape of a minister

Supplanted religions and nations
Curing the sick and sickly notions

Seeing that the world was totally infidel
He drew a sword from his prophethood

People inhabiting the surface of the earth
All were pressed by the brave faithful

A Hindu concealed as the King of Turkestan
Fakhfur¹⁰, drinking a cup of wine as chinaman

The weak Caezar inadequate and insignificant
Cautiously roaming with prying eyes

9- *him* Mohammed.

10- *Fakhfur* : a Chinese Emperor.

As the Arab king raised the flag
The Persian Chosroes wondered twice

The Turks, Abyssinians, Europeans and the Tartar
Anyone who was to the religion a bar

Unavoidably many perished by the sword
Until the religion was partially followed

The falsehood they washed with fire
They put down many temples of fire

When he announced the religion
Sabians, Sabbatarians and Christians

The Torah they forgot most
The Bible and the book of psalms to the memory lost

As Jesus was reading the Bible
By inspiration and revelation he gave his title

Saying : « Good tidings ! for a messenger more Exalted
Shall follow me, by the name of Ahmed »

He made his call by hand and tongue
Sword in hand and Koran on his tongue

A fine countenance, a messenger, also a prince
Full of wisdom, with a book, also a sword

Unread before, yet a public teacher
With no property and attainment, yet a benefactor

With no horses and attendants, yet conquering the world
With no drum and flag, yet echoing all over the world

Anyone you saw he must have been
The army consisted of soldiers « no one had seen »

With no tent, headquarters and court
The clouds making an umbrella of sort

He was so well informed of the forward
As he was so well aware of the backward

His shadow did not leave the grounds
Altogether he heard a hundred sounds

To him the minerals communicated
With him the plants associated

Not one kind of the race of animals
Did not believe in his prophethood

Only a few of Adam's sons fell
Becoming fodder for the fire of hell

In short : on earth and in heaven
The result : in all human and in jinn

Nothing exists without his grace
No one surpasses him as supporter

Those hapless in his nation
He advanced by his resolution

With his devoutness religion was strengthened
With his law the path was straightened

The scientists are like prophets
The worshippers are like saints

One of the great companions
Equalled five hundred brave infidels

But all of them together
Could not match in dignity a figure

There are people who doubt the religion
Talking madly of the religion

The Koran and the Discourse : what miracles !
The texts and the chapters : what evidences !

What fine friends are Bubakir and Omar
What wonderful companions are Osman and Ali¹¹

11- *Bubakir, Omar, Osman and Ali the four wise Califs successors to Mohammed.*

O, King, the high ranking !
The Orbit sun, shining and shading !

With my knowledge your description is unsavoury
Your eulogist is possessor of glory

O, King of Kings, what shall I say ?
The word of God depicts the way

O, King ! Your's is a good name as Yasin
Taha ! Your's is a talisman as Tasin¹²

This will suffice, O belovedly chosen
By your life God has sworn

O, Generous, by your life a hundred times I swear
If sins two hundred loads we bear

We may be bad to any degree
Yet we shall not despair of Thee

Until reaching out to poor Khani
Hell-bound, impure and meany

He too badly and doglike
Pleads for mercy, nationlike

That bad worker like a dog appears
O, Lord associate him with religion's peers.

12- Letters stands.

4. Asking the Prophet for supplication and begging God for forgiveness

O, means of the existence of both worlds
Standing at a distance of a bow shot from the lord

King of Kings of Medina Throne
Our religion is a miracle of your own

Walking orbits is but a step from you
The pride of the angels is a mere nod from you

You cut the moon with one sign
You deflect the light with one expression

O, King of the throne of « were it not you »
Rise and go up to heaven, actively

Ready for you is the Pegasus Burak
Flocks of angels shall be at your flank

So that before you the screen be removed
That you may speak unscreened to the Lord

Saying to Him « Almighty and majestic you are »
Saying to Him « Ancient and everlasting you are »

We are poor, perishing and earth-destined
Unless you guide, we are finished

First, why did you merit us with this honour ?
The crown of estimation you placed on our head ?

Honouring us with succession
When you entrusted the faith to us

You had known that we were ignorant
We did not see the trust as important

Whatever you had decreed as our fate
We could not add one atom to it, nor abate¹³

13- could not change our fate.

It is beyond the perfection of your clemency
And far from the majesty of your mercy

To make excuses for sin and infidelity
You are so worthy of this Royalty ?

All the same to you are faith and infidelity
Equal in your eyes are hell and immortality

Should you indicate displeasure
Heaven for us will be as fire

But should the abundant cloud of mercy rain
Hell for us into heaven shall turn

Whether sinner or infidel
Of you all are hopeful

Every infidel and bandit
Is a facet of your aspect

In your almighty name we became disbelievers
Your absolving name has made us sinners

If you could not forgive infidelity
If our sins you are recording

Satan will gloat over our misery
And many accursed will be rejoicing

Would this be fair, O, refuge of the World !
Would this be appropriate, O, shepherd of the herd !

This accursed and wicked wolf at last
Like sheep tears us apart

In short make that rebellious demon
Only lodge in hell and alone

For us public people and private in general
The evil, mutineer and criminal

Intercede mercifully, Sire
Save us all from fire

5. Our plight

O, cupbearer ! Will you for God's sake
Pour a drop of wine into the kingly

So the glass may show the sphere
Whatever is wished shall become clear

To reveal the situation for each
When the welfare is within reach

Our retreat is complete
Is it now likely to cease

Or will it go on further
Until we all wither ?

Is it possible in the cycle of the orbit
That our star will rise in the planet

That our luck may become loving
That it will wake up once from slumbering

That a world refuge for us emerges
And a king for us appears

The power of our art to be established
The value of our pen to be confirmed

Our plight to be remedied
Our learning to be demanded

If we had a proud leader
Generous and a patron of literature

Our currency would be minted coinage
Not so doubtful and worthless exchange

Though it is pure and distinct
More precious is the coin of the mint

If we had a king
God had seen him worthy of a crown

A throne, for him, was established
Our fortune would have brightened

If a crown had been obtained
Prosperity would certainly have been attained

He would have looked after us, the orphans
And would have protected us from the villains

The Turks would not have beaten us at all
Our land would not be ruins under the owl

Ruled and oppressed by the riffraff
Overcome and subjected to the Tajik's and the Turk's dictat

But God from eternity so willed
These Turks and Persians against us unleashed

If subordination to them is so shameful
It is for the famous disgraceful

It is disgraceful for the ruler and the prince
To subject the poor and the poet to injustice

Anyone who raised the sword resolutely
Would seize the state for himself courageously

That is why the world is like a bride
Falling in the hand drawing a sword

The bride's deed, contract and dowery
Are kindness, forgiveness and generosity

I wisely asked the world
What is your dowery ? Determination, it said

Thus the world by sword and benevolence
Surrenders to that kind of man

I wonder at the wisdom of the Lord
The Kurds at the state of the world

For what reason is their deprivation
For what purpose is their condemnation

They seized by sword the city of fame
And forced a resolute country to tame

Everyone of them is as generous as Hatem¹⁴
Everyone of them is as brave as Rustom¹⁵

Notice that between the Arabs and the Georgians
Is Kurdish, becoming like the towers

Besieged by these Persians and Turks
In the four corners are all Kurds

The two sides have made the tribe of the Kurds
A target to eliminate with their arrows

Because at the borders they are keys
And each community is a strong barrier

These seas of the Turks and the Tajik
Whenever they move or stir

The Kurds become stained with blood
They keep them apart like a strait

Resolution, bravery and generosity
Courage, princeliness and endurance

That is the mettle of the Kurds
Shown by sword and equitable fervour

Though they are jealous of bravery
They are coy of charity

This fervour and utmost zeal
Rejecting charity in any deal

That is why they are disunited
Always rebellious and divided

If we could have an agreement
Together following a leading establishment

14- Hatem al-Tai legendarily generous.

15- Rustom : a hero.

The Turks, Arabs and Persians entirely
All would have been our servants¹⁶

We would have completed the religion and the State
We would have attained the knowledge and wisdom

The articles would have been distinguished
The excellent would have attained perfection

16- Literally, in common idiom respect our natural XXX.

6. Why this book is written in Kurdish

Of perfection Khani is devoid
The field of perfection he saw as void

That is acting not with expertise and ability
Perhaps due to tribalism and partiality

In short : stubbornly, albeit out of injustice
He embarked on this unusual novelty

Pouring limpid drink to the dreg
As the pearl of the Kurdish tongue

Bringing it into order and regularity
Suffering hardship for the sake of the public

So that people might not say « The Kurds
Have no origin, knowledge and base

Various nations have their own books
With the sole exception of Kurds »

Also the foresighted may not say : « The Kurds
Do not make love one of their aims

That they are neither desiring nor desired
That they are neither lovers nor beloved

That they have no share of love
Neither real nor metaphoric »

The Kurds do not lack much perfection
They are orphans lacking opportunities

In the whole they are not so ignorant and uneducated
Perhaps they are humble and unprotected

Had we but a leader !
High minded and a good speaker !

Learning, art, prudence and perfection
Poetry, love, book and verse collection

Such matters he appreciated
Such currencies he accepted

The flag of the measured word
I would have raised on top of the world

I would have resurrected the soul of Mela Jiziri¹⁷
Put life back into Ali Hariri

And so pleased Feqi Teyran
He would forever be a fan

However the market is stagnant
No one is buying our garment

Especially in this age when money
Is for us the darling and honey

Where the greed for the income and Dinar
Has made each of us an idolator

When you sell perfect knowledge for a copper
And sell wisdom for a sole

No one would take Jami as a groom
No one would take Nizami as a servant

As I saw this was the sign of the time
That there was a war over the dime

An alchemist I wished to be
As I saw that was not to be

I worked equitably for a time
Refining the impure jewellery

My heart could not bear cheating
Never became a means to that purpose

Forfeiting the religion without gaining the Dinar
Then unavoidably I became a coppersmith

My hidden copper, I exposed
It was stationery, I blessed

17- *Mela Jiziri, Ali Hariri, Fequi Teyran Famous Kurdish poets.*

The blessing was effective
Becoming a means to secure a need

These coins may be worthless
Yet they are refined, pure and priceless

With no defect, small change and quite perfect
As general tender they are valid

Pure Kurdish, not suspected
Not Gold to say whitened

Our copper is red and mill-made
It is not a silver lacking in gauge

So do not say that our coinage has little value
That it is unminted by a king of kings

Had it been engraved when minted
It would be in currency not counterfeited

Beloved indebted to no one
So it is doomed and unfulfilled

The stationery of ones unsupported
If by a king not chartered

Unsound by many an expert
Acceptable by many a prudent.

But the ruler of the age of learning
Never listened with understanding

The prince named Mirza
Whose mere look is alchemy

Cleansing impure hearts
Refining spurious coins

One hundred weights of red copper
At once turns them yellow with a glance

The high he would make low, sullenly
The low he would make high, kindly

Holding Pashas as prisoners
Releasing them as paupers

Everyday a thousand mendicants
Every moment, a hundred beggars

He enriches with activity
Wisely avoiding all symptoms of charity

If he would look at us just once
With that elixir of blessed countenance

These words he would turn into poems
These coins he would change into Dinars

But his look is exceedingly general
He does not see us as special

Still he is a mercy to the public
O, Lord ! Give him everlasting life.

7. Cupbearer ! Pour wine into the glass

Cupbearer ! into the heavenly glass pour
A wine that resembles the immortal soul

Converting the mind to a fresh spirit
With a wine enriching the spirit for a moment

Cupbearer ! into the bluish cup pour
A water that enables the heart to soar

That pleases a heart that is sad
And astounds a mind that is mad

Cupbearer ! into the jewelled cup pour
That syrup of the pure pressing-place

The dissolved ruby and flowing pearls
The refreshing compote, the misty liquor

Pour in the grains of your pearls
The wine, the rose water it resembles

Now and then to the wine worshippers' hand
To people with parts of their hearts in the hand

So that the cup of hearts be jewelled
And the party of amusement be arranged

The council of the chronic drinkers of wine
Intoxicate anew with new wine

From the limitless abundance maybe
A drop would suffice for me

So the joy of the cup of clear wine
And delight from the grape of the brilliant vine

Inspire in my soul, a longing
And excite in my heart relishing

To instil in the soul an effect
And move the heart with feeling

So that my soul be unburdened
And my cage widely opened

The refinement of my heart be attained
My voice with the nightingale's equated

The bird of the dead heart enabled to fly
A singer, unscreened, to sing

One moment like a warbler groaning
The next like a nightingale moaning

To sigh and moan at dawn
Whenever a fresh breeze is blown

Breaking a hundred heart buds
Making lilies expressive and informing

The buds to flourish out of thorns
Becoming bloody during frolics

The red rose shall cry from the dew's love
the nightingale to laugh at the contemporaries' demands

Cupbearer ! Hand over the flowery wine
Without dulcimer echo and tambourine sound

So that the police and reckoner may not harrow
Let the joy begin to vanish the sorrow

The confusion to leave the saddened heart
So once again to make a happy start

To get drunk saying empty words
Be intoxicated, engaged in idle talk

Without merriment, nothing I could say
Or write poems, like pearls, if I may

I would be sickly, disclosing secrets
Be wordless, talking mystic

I would be like a flute intoning
Or like a parrot repeating

So that miracles I could show
And stations I could go through

Branch of music of a heart in tune
Filling the rose-garden with gewesht and shehnaz melodies

As a flute playing from the depth of the heart
Giving out a hundred sounds like a cymbals

Like the rebec without the violin
Without a pistle sounding our tambourine

Venus hearing the song of the lovers
Dancing at the top of the nine layers

The infected heart, with gold to cure
The love of Mem and Zin to endure

Making a legend of the tragic explanation
Making Mem and Zin a justification

Getting such a thrilling tune out of screen
Giving new life to Mem and Zin

The sick lover and beloved
Today as a physician skilled

I shall treat and medicate
The two hapless I shall resurrect

The malady of Mem's aching heart
The suffering of Zin's tormented soul

She, the chaste and honourable maiden
He, the sinless beyond accusation

I shall make renowned in kind and method
Elevate to excellence both lover and beloved

That way I shall re-endow them with pride
So that the foreseeing may come to cite

Sweethearts for Mem will be crying
Lovers at Zin's pain will be laughing

Fellow-sufferers to enjoy felicity
Non-sufferers be engrossed in humility

People whose hearts and souls are pure
Who are moral, fair and sure

Shall approve generally of my contribution
Saying : « Well has it been written »

People who were blessed by love
And those eternally vowing « God we love »

May come and hear the story
Some to use it to forget only

Yet some to listen soulfully
And some to bid farewell wholeheartedly

But I beg the recollectors
Not to keep the letters from benefitors

This book, whether good or bad
With it I have toiled hard

An early fruit, a child, just ripening
Though it may not be that outstanding

But I have not picked from any orchard
Like thieves seeking the fruit

It is a fruit in the garden of heart
Impeccable, virtuous and noble

An early fruit, whether sweet or bitter
Disposed in the children's nature

I hope that people with position
Shall not uglify these children.

Even if this vine were not succulent
It is Kurdish; that much is sufficient

Even if this child were not so pretty
It is the first-born, to me full of beauty

Even if this vine were not so delicious
This child to me is very precious

Beloved, with the dress and ear-ring
All mine, without borrowing

Words, meaning and expressions
Structures, references and compositions

Subject, story and intention
Symbol, virtue and reflection

Attribute, word, meanings and method
Not one have I borrowed

They are wholly products of conception
As maiden, a new bride, a virgin

O, Lord ! Do not put in the hand of impure
This heart-felt evidence tender and pure

It is hoped from people with thoughts
They will not hold against me any faults

They shall not revile, out of jealousy
And shall correct any inadequacy

Possessors of perfection cover shortcomings
The self-interested are busy with fault declaimings.

It is expected from the secret-holders
They shall not become my mockers

I am a wandering seller, not a jeweller
Self-made I am, not a scholar

A Kurd ! Mountaineer, a frontiersman
These few words of the Kurdish world

Be received with the grace of kindness
And heard by the ear with fairness

Schemers with ears attentive
If I err do not be vindictive

Save the poet embarrassment
Say, if possible, a word of encouragement

Don't be amazed at errors and faults
And don't interpret like zealots.

8. In praise of the Prince of Botan and his two sisters: Siti and Zin¹⁸

The painter of the page of the story
The reporter of the tablet of history

This way set the picture and drawing
Using this method in the moulding and embellishing

Saying « A king in ancient times
Rose, in his government superbly

Various nations submitted to him, obediently
A prince of Kurds of Arab descent

His throne was in Jizir¹⁹ and his star was rising
His luck was strong and his position was praiseworthy

He ruled over the Turk, the Arab and the Persian
He was famous as the Prince of Botan

His great ancestors, father and grandfather
Where related to and descended from Khalid²⁰

The tyrannical onbit was beware of his potency
A sword drawn from the sheath of the mighty

Sovereign of the realm and pride of the faith
The name of the prince was Zeynedin

The title prince fitted him decorously
The decoration suited him religiously

The marks of the courage of that king
Filled from the fish to the moon

His sphere was the orbit of the world
And his kingdom was the emblem of the End

18- The i in Zin is pronounced as in « been ».

19- Jizir the capital of the principality of Botan. Now a town in South East Turkey.

20- Companion Khalid Ibn Al Waleed.

Hatem needed his generosity
Rustem lacked his bravery

From the perfection of his magnanimity
Hatem folded the record of his generosity

Intelligence, art, generosity and gallantry
Discipline, order, organisation and poetry

State, religion and piety
Leadership, authority and majesty

A treasure he was, full of each
A buried-trove concealing each

No hardship for him was allotted
No loss for him was destined

Possessing various kinds of rare jewels and articles
Owning various types of artefacts and valuables

The sum of all one possibly desired
He had as a matter of course acquired

He had attained what others were claiming and demanding
He had possessed what others were desiring and adoring

The court of the harem's with maidens
Was full of houris like the heavens

He had many houris as in providence
And had boys like angels in attendance

But the chicks of the family of the state
The early-fruits of the orchard of chastity

Were two princesses with that king
Two suns were with that moon

Thus from that noble origin
Came two carefree girls

One was as the cypress of the garden really
Her name was Siti truthfully

The other closer to the heart and soul of the prince
Her name derived from half of the name of the prince²¹

The narrator this way told me of that queen
Saying the name of that houri was Zin

One was exceptionally sweet, absolutely lovely
One was the soul of heart, a converted houri

One was brunette, the other blond
One was a houri, the other fairy

The houri and fairy were peerless
Because they were of the eternal light essence

The beauty of their faces was unseen
The grace of their beauty was eternal

Lips as pearls, temples as jasmines and cheeks as flowers
Eclipsing the beauty of the Khulluk idols

Two ear-locks as the storks of the wheat-ears
Two cheeks as the leaves of the red roses

Those red-roses and the wheat-ears, free
Sprouting in the stature of the cypress tree

Roses were spreading roots and opening
The ears were collecting as a bunch and gathering

The grace of the temple as the line of the yagot
The dimple of the chin as the magic of Harut

As if they were made of the bellies gazelle's musk
And the orbit wizard sprinkled them with specks

The moles, dots, whiteness and redness
The House, the Stone, the Pilgrimage and the Visit²²

The eyebrow as the curve of the orbit bow
The eyelash exactly as the straight arrow

21- Zin half of Zinedin or Zeinedin.

22- The House Macca ; the Stone the Black Stone ; the Visit : Umra,
unscheduled Pilgrimage.

The source of the maddening wildness
Symbolised in the astounding eyes

Becoming amazed at the twinkling of the eye
Exposing the wisdom of the eye

The forehead showing the touch of the crown
As though it were Gabriel's wing in the horizon.

Upright always standing
The sun in service attending

Anyone seeing the face and the lobe of the ear
The sense would at once to pieces tear

The neck in the cupbearer's hand you would imagine
As a flask full of eternal wine

Or similar to the sherbet of the sugar cane
Or to the well of the life fountain

The fingertips and henna-painted nails
Awed and pained the rejoicing heart

People who saw the waistline
Were struck by a sight so fine

When arms and bracelets
No more reproaches and complaints were displayed remained

Although both were like the spirits
They were, in beauty as twins

Though Siti was quite tender
Yet Zin resembled a houri

Though Siti looked as a star in sight
Yet Zin beside her was the moon so bright

Though Siti looked as a moon
Zin was warm as a sun

The two were like two lanterns
As they walked through orchards and gardens

Animals and minerals moaned
Humans and plants were plundered

The head shawl with jewels was crowned
The necklace with gems was chained

As they put the gems on the forehead
Lovers died in the hand of love

This embellishment ornament and jewellery so bright
Were arrayed forward, backward, left and right

As they walked the fairies went along
Enamouring the Saints in their recesses

Whether Sheikh, Mullah or prince
Rich, poor or Dervish

None is not a seeker of beauty
None is not desirous of the union

Some are after the eternal grace
And some are after the vain mould

But all are certainly after a true friend
The difference is between the hide and mind

9. Beauty and Love

Whatever there was in the realm of the world
God gathered in property and wealth

The total treasures of the czar
Including the mirror of Alexander

The buried diamonds of Khayan²³
Even the pearl in the seal of Salomon

Though they might be exceptionally valuable
To a particle of beauty were not even comparable

The beauty in the faces of Siti and Zin
Became a sea of love-fire

The wave that rose high and fell low in the sea
The sun passing the perigee and apogee

Moved hundreds of hearts and souls
And people saw them as symbols

The sun and moon getting together
Making the world as purchaser altogether

The hunter of the beauty of those gazelles
The caller of the echo of those lovelies

Some caller like each as a lion
Could not sufficiently groan and moan

Days and nights they were groaning
Even with the angels they were moaning

The beauty that has no limit and no end
Shall not drive away a lover to the end

But lovers are different from flirters
Some are selfish and some are sacrificers

Some souls desire little for the soul
Some souls are sacrificed the soul

Some attain union as Tardin
Some suffer affliction as Mem and Zin

23- *The King of Turkestan.*

10. News of Mem and Tajdin

Let us go back to the previous story
To people suffering from the love agony

Though they were limitless and incalculable
And were commoners, servants and many a noble

But of excellent servants
Among hundreds tall and proud adolescents

Each in the realm of grace a sun
Each in the field of speech a heart burner

Each in perfection as a full moon
Each in majesty as a great king

They, too, were lovers, demanding
They, too, were demanding and desiring

But not by seeing and witnessing
Perhaps through hearsay and hearing

All were in the service of the prince
All were in eachother's confidence

The ring leader of those resembling fairies
The top crown of those with qualities of angels

Was called Tajdin, a youth
The epic hero of the time, a champion

Of noble descent, kin and ancestor
The first of the list and the boys' leader

His father was called Iskender
But the Arabs named him Ghazanfer²⁴

Because with the sword he was as a lion
On the battle day he was a thousand men

Tajdin had two heroic brothers
Resembling two daring falcons

24- *Ghazanfer : Lion.*

Always filling enemy's heart with terror
One was called Arif and Cheko the other

But from all the nobles and commoners
From brothers, uncles and father

He had chosen a youth as a brother
Nay, I am mistaken, as a torch

The day he could not see that brother
Seemed a night without a light

The world for him would darken
The sun for him would blacken

A friend in joy and sorrow, a chum
An alleviator of grief, by the name of Mem

Mem too was devoted to him as a perfect lover
Not as a father, an uncle and a brother

Though he was a brother in the other life
You would say in this and the other life

Tajdin was the son of the Minister of the Council of State
Mem was the offspring of the Secretary of the Council of State

Both youths loved each other
Both brothers were true to each other

One was Qays of the time and the other was Layla
One was Wamik of the age and the other was Azra

They were wholehearted lovers, not loose
Basically, they were like Venus and the Sun

Love, brotherhood and fraternity
Could not be by flattery and hypocrisy

Love is not easy but fraught with difficulty
What is required of loving loyalty

If you do not show loyalty to the end
Do not go through the difficulty at the start

11. Celebrating Newroz²⁵ and the New Year



25- Newroz : Kurdish National Day, beginning of the New Year, 21st of March.

The Creator of Universe, from abundance of innate quality
The orbit bodies, through ability

Without mould circumference on measure
Without using a tool, table or cutter

So much magnified and round
This way made and repeated

Brought with the exhibition of existence
And drawn with the scene of evidence

The wisdom is that all are working
Some are on foot and some are riding

Some are slow and some are fast
Some are easy and some are hard

Some are managing and some are managed
Some are forthcoming and some are predestined

Some are clerks, some are masters
Some are singers, some are hangers

Some worship the sun, some worship the moon
Some banish the griefs, some attract the boon

Some are maidens like Zin
Some are purchasers like Mem

They are in the whole polished and enlighteners
Some are kings and some are ministers

Some through the natural motion
Come to the spring initiation

Renewing for us the year
As it comes into moderate air

The old sage of yesteryear
This way related to us the affair

Saying that the custom in the past ages
In all quarters and places

As the paramount knight of the East²⁶
Changed into the month of March

When the zodiac sign heralded the New Year
No one ever stayed in a dwelling or a house

All went out of their homes
Including even the old and the elderlies

The day it became the feast of Newroz
Glory to the time when the Spirit rose

They turned the deserts and the meadows into dwellings
They converted the prairies and the plains into parks

Particularly bachelors and virgin girls
In short, the rarity among jewels

All attired and decorated
All to have fun were permitted

But not thro' accusation and charity
Perhaps by the way of law and legality

Because the purpose of their excursion
Their aim of going to the plain

Whether for desiring or to be desired
For the lover and the beloved

Was for both flocks to see each other
And suitably to marry one another

26- *The paramount knight of the East the sun.*

12. City folks go out to celebrate the New Year

The cycle of the orbit of the lucky blue
As again Newroz appeared anew

Based on that blessed custom
The civilian and military population

The cities, castles and houses, deserted
Which then seemed plundered and looted

Row after row walked to mountains and plains
Group after group marched to picnics and excursions

All small and big nations
Absolutely no one stayed in towns

Some went to the gardens, walking
Some went to the orchards, riding

Some went with the public in multitude
Some went with friends or in solitude

The ladies and the damsels as ramblers
Filled the meadows as flowers

The houris making their dwellings like the heavens
Without veil, charity or boredom

Virgins, girls and boys
Maidens, with ear-locks and moles

Mates and full-rounded virgins
Bearless boys and teenaged gazelles

Showing one another their beauty as if a cloth
While guessing in length and breadth

Enamoured by love in the market
As sellers of beauty and also as buyers

Virgin girls, boys and Newyearly
Century-old, young and elderly

New Year in the usual custom and manner
Was raising ceremoniously its noble banner

13. The Prince calls on the youth to celebrate Newroz

The illuminating lamp of the blue dome
The niche of the Aries coming home

As the New Year renewed its construction
The Prince gave the fine boys permission

As the word reached the youngsters
All proceeded as lovers

Going to the exhibition auction together
Each in aim and desire as lover

Except only Mem and Tajdin
Who were as girls disguising

That is at the time of the outing
These two brothers were masquerading

Wearing gold-brocades and sarcenets
Covered by some finely cut garments

Turning the locks of hair into forehead ringlets
And the tufts of hair into ear-lock and plaits

The reason they were disguising
Was to avoid any formal undertaking

Putting on clothes charmingly
They were picnicing elegantly

14. Mem and Tajdin come across Siti and Zin

Those two boys, disguising
While through the town, passing

Suddenly saw a sight, a wonder
Whereby their minds went asunder

They noticed in every quarter and street
In every alley, window and retreat

A Hundred of handsome and high statured youth
Wearing pure silk and fine wool cloth

Five hundred boys, girls and youth
That many of old and elderly

All kinds of males and females
Some naked, some dressed

Some high and great
Some low and small

Some bare-footed, some bare-headed
Feet battling and heads like bells

Some were drunk, some yet tipsy
Some breathless, some still comfy

Some conversing, some dumbfounded
Some wondering, some bewildered

Some were sober, some intoxicated
Some self-controlled, some confused

Some were wailing, some were calling
Some free from the yoke of feeling

Each one in a position, changed
Each one, heart-bleeding, alienated

Both were for a while perplexed
Both were in a sea of thought, drowned

Tajdin stopped and enquired
A question to an old man he asked

Saying « O, Khizir the guide on the way
What is this affliction, do say ?

He replied : « two gay, fine and fierce lads
Have become executioners of crowds

Anyone who sees the two drunken
Immediately is thrown into such confusion »

They said « Did you not find out what sort they are ? »
He answered « two boys, exceptionally handsome, they are »

They said « Are they drawing six-leaved swords ?
Or merely holding arrows and daggers ? »

He said : « with winks and twinkles
They kill people like the wolves »

They were considering to see the boys
And to prepare for a gallant bout

Both were at that state when suddenly
They saw, by God's omnipotency

Those two lads looking like two statues
Lit in the forms of the king of stars

Identical in shape, frame and dress
But unknown in the town

They behaved like angels and looked like fairies
They were neither sellers nor buyers

As the brothers saw the two righteous
Their hearts and souls became so delireous

They were madly distracted
No longer aware of any sense in the mind

With no comprehension and zeal, no mind and sense
Wondering on this earth in suspense

In short, they had enough of the mind and the soul
Immediately and from afar the two also were attracted

Those two great fairies
Saw two extremely lovely angels

Resembling the moon but shining as the sun
Loveable, yet scorching the hearts

As the hunt of the semi « In the name of God »
Undoubtedly reached the State of the mysterious

They unavoidably hurried up to the games
And stared at the faces of these shapes

They realised that the hunt was not loose
That they were the vanguard of the love force

They stopped and looked carefully
Their hearts compassionate and tenderly

In short : owing to the grace of those gazelles
Compassion filled the hearts of those boys

The secrets of their hearts were conveyed to each other
The lights of their faces were enamoured to one another

The road of acquaintance was passable
And the souls henceforth were inseparable

One pure kind of an invisible world
Showing the bond without a doubt shred

Tying them in a problem, mutual
Beauty engulfed them in a desire, mutual

You would say : the mould and the inverted
All four : the desiring and the desired

Were certainly one : flesh and spirit
Were fully united as body and soul

Love in their hearts was sweetness
Hate in their hearts was bitterness

Although for some these are events non-existent
Yet in truth they are ancient

As soldiers they were drafted into this sparkling force
And became immortal in the annals of the Right Science

Some are to be united, some are to be divided
Some are to be in agreement, some are to be in discord

Those united in harmony
Resolved not to stand on ceremony

Namely those blood-thirsty boys
When they saw them without joy

Loved them with a hundred hearts
And sat down to look them over in their sights

Looking a moment at the statures and the heights
Gazing a little at the ear-locks and the moles

Asking « Whose daughters they are, we wonder
Or perhaps they could be the angels of God

In which place have these vines ripened ?
In which garden have these roses appeared ?

In which valley have these cypresses been growing ?
In which meadows have these birds been flying ?

The rose-water of the rose-coloured tears
Reddened their faces and ears

Love had made them so uncautious
That they were decidedly unconscious

At last as written by the pen of Love
A message on the board of the heart

They wanted to know what family they were
Because they did not know whose descendants they were

The rings of those beauties
They removed from the owner's fingers

Then slipped their own rings off their fingers
And put them on the others' fingers, as markers

Exchanging rubies with beads
And diamonds with crystal glasses

Abandoning the New Year and fun making
Exchanging their happy living for suffering

Suddenly the foreigners dismounted
They bade farewell and departed

As two games remained the brothers
Their feet tied with chains and fetters

They stood in a pitch black night
After the disappearance of the sun and the moon

Their souls as the semi « In the name of God » bird
Without vigour, without strength and without heart

Bewildered, dumbfounded, deprived and stricken
Enamoured, confounded, maddened and drunken

Straying hundred times into foldings
Before reaching their own lodgings

True they reached safely their place
Yet for these embittered and luckless

Time, day and night, morning and evening
Had absolutely the same meaning

15. Mem and Tajdin grapple with the problem

Those pairs of feminine eyes of both hawks
Those singed wings Mem and Tajdin

Goose « and partridge » chasing zealously
Looking, on the face of it, as falcons suddenly

A light was extinguished, abruptly
They were no longer able to perceive really

Though in the week of the Aries
They were too wild and mad

As that week passed
The love initiates came to a decision

And one day proceeded together
To take a look at the condition of eachother

Love had effected such a change
They failed, at first, to recognise each other

Initially their common reaction was estrangement
Then as they re-established rapproachment

They found themselves tied hand and foot
Thus flying became impossible as it were

Over them was a cloud of darkness
Before them was a screen of familiarity

Without food, drink and pleasure
Without aim, desire and leisure

Drunken by the look in the eye of the beloved
Tipsy, drowsy, sick and dispirited

Their hearts as the mouths of the idols depressed
Moaning from the depth of the heart and distressed

Saying : « How come we have fallen so sick ?
In which war were we wounded ?

If not, then why are we so powerless ?
Injured, weak and heartless ? »

That is how they were examining
The nature of their conditions feeling

Tajdin saw in the finger of the brother
A jewel shining like a torch

A ruby as a seed of pomegranate
As a lamp in a dark night

Like a spark it was shining
With the name of Zin written in engraving

He moved his hand to take it
To look carefully and see it

Mem too noticed in Tajdin's hand
An invaluable and inestimable diamond

But with Siti's name carved
By a master possessing skill

If a money-changer turned into Hypocrates
Were to estimate these weights and carats

And was to argue like Plato
Bargaining for the treasury of Croesus

The value and worth of those rings
Would exceed all that was estimated

Locked in dilemma and wondering
Immersed in a great deal of thinking

They knew that the owners of the rings
And the doers of the deeds, were Siti and Zin

On the day the alteration feast heralded
They too had masqueraded

While they had attired themselves as girls
Those two had disguised themselves as boys

They were the ones of whom was said on Newroz day
As the sun and the moon they light the way

They were the two with the hands ringed
They were the two getting the people killed

They were the ones in the town doing hanging
They were the ones causing the people crying

They were the ones whom they deeply loved
They were the ones who had branded their hearts

The two brothers, with thinking and reasoning
Recognised their opposites without doubting

Tajdin had a feeling
Love had him reeling

He said « Get up brother ! out of bed
Stop this moaning and suffering

We are lions, they are gazelles
It is shameful we are groaning at their hands »

Mem was the quintessence of total lover
He said « You may be a little troubled, brother !

But as for me, torn to pieces, am I
Broken from head to foot, am I

This body of mine has been lived
These lines have all been spotted

The effect of such a love and passion
In detail, is long, wide and deep emotion

Not a spot is free of hurting
Is it any worth you ask why I am moaning

The heart is now the home of settling passion
In this condition, in this empty position

I may be supplanted, no wonder
And have the form, not the essence, of matter

The prince of love casually came
Concealing his true purpose as he came

And this state, place, body and substance
Love exploited for itself as convenience

Soul, liver, heart and intestines
Hands, head, feet, back and eyes

By God none has any rest
By God none has any zest

They have frightened away acquaintances
Generally saying: « We are in love »

You do not inquire after my condition you oppressor
Worthily you ask me not to be a moaner

As he complained in this way
Tajdin could answer in no way

While these two remained with these wounds
We turn our attention to Siti and Zin

16. Siti and Zin return from New Year celebration and relate their experiences to their granny



They too returned, still disguised
At once undressed so as not to be recognised

Although they changed their dresses
They could not forget their experiences

Love had effected such a transformation
No longer were they in control of their emotions

No one would have thought they were Siti and Zin
People would have gathered they were foreign

They had a worldly granny²⁷
Quite as the devil canny

The might of the orbit before her was prone
The name of the old woman was Hayzabon

She came upon them suddenly
Saw that they were dressing hurriedly

Sitting without relish and flavour
Chin drooping without savour

That is in a dilemma and weary position
The two moons were in an awful condition

The pretty flowers looked withered
Their ruddy faces were white like jasmine

The fine red colour changing
The red rose saffron turning

She noticed the fairies were bare
Beloved by the love of men

She said « O, passions of the minds and hearts
Each of you is the light of both my eyes

May God save you
Or my soul be sacrificed for you

So shackled are you, with fettering
Only today you went hunting

27- Literally wet-nurse.

Why did you so quickly abandon New Year
Say truthfully, how did this come to pass ?

Say for a start, what is the position ?
Is this my imagination or mere confusion ?

Why are you, O, high statured, so grieving
for every effect there is a cause

What was the cause, do tell me
As no secret can escape me

Now to necromancy I shall resort
The names and secrets I will ferret out

Or set up my glass and handkerchief
To discover the nature of the mischief

So they told the granny the secret :
« In the morning as we left

Anyone we saw or met by chance
Turned mad and love-giddy at once

Then an injustice happened that passed the limiting
And our oppression appeared to be recurring

And we came back hurt and saddened
Returning light-headed and maddened

The granny, with deliberation and planning
Sat down by them and started reassuring

Saying each of you is a Shahriyar in terms of beauty
Each of you is a queen and a majesty

Who is the one who is not obedient and needy
Who is the one who is not paying the tax freely

Anyone you have loved fairy princesses
Shall be attracted by your beauty

Especially if your levers come from this city
I will now consider them as suitors

Say who ? So that I shall go to see
Make them an offer and fetch them to thee

They told Hayzabon the magician
« For our affliction, O, skilful physician

You could certainly find the cure
If we were able to tell you anything

Declaring and retelling are hopeless
All attempts at treatment are useless

Among all the boys and girls in Botan
Perhaps among all high statured, in Botan

Anyone excelling in elegance and grace
Inevitably in our book is noted

That is we have come face to face
With all the people in this place

Today, two girls as if in light illuminated
From head to foot in pure silk garmented

Looking similar to the eastern king²⁸
Radiating like full moons

Suddenly appeared before us
Enthralling us from afar

We went to see who they were
They did not seem to be mortals

They were angels or fairies surely
Because they were not made of water and clay, certainly

As we saw those fairy princesses
We too lost our senses

They resembled two glasses of Jemshid
As we resembled the sun and the moon

As we neared them and were abreast of them
It seemed the lamp and the glass were equal

28- *the sun.*

The lantern was reflecting the star
A light that our hearts acquired
And if the lantern and the wick came from them
It seemed the fire from our faces came
Again our oil and our fire
Caught us burning our hearts
Nobody knows the state of self-burning
Is it a dream, imagination or an awakening ? »

17. The granny notices the rings belonging to Mem and Tajdin

The granny was puzzled by events so mysterious
She said « O, soul and mould of the granny

You both went to watch boys
Devoid of the love of gazelles

The picture which you saw is not feasible
Your inclination to the female sect is impossible

The inclination of a woman is towards a man
And you girls desire boys

Does a girl ever purchase a girl ?
Without a valid coinage business is impossible

The boy is a mirror for the self-beauty
The girl is the aspect of light quality

Without self and quality, it is an incidental example
Without essence, the incidental is futile

The incidental is established by the essence
Can the moon be luminous without the sun ?

The inclination cut off the boy's face
Even from the houris and of the angel's race

The inclination which could enamour you
Those Laylas who could turn you into Majnun²⁹

If Majnun were not opposite to Layla
How could Layla be inclined to Layla

Would a flower be in love with a flower
Could Azra³⁰ herself become Wamik

If Khosroes had not been the Knight of Shebdiz
Would Shirin have become sugar to Perwiz ?

29- Majnun lover of Layla. It also means mad.

30- Azra : a girl in love with boy Wamik.

Ferhad would not have shed a stream of bloody tears
He would not have seen the rose coloured rider

For that reason in the world of men
Boys, noble and plain

The heart never inclining to anybody
So low then you are depraved and giddy

With no name and known address
How could your hearts be attracted to them ?

I can't believe this to be possible utterly
Is this a dream, or are you imagining merely ?

When Zin heard the rhetoric
She emitted this tune from the screen

And this way replied to the old Granny
You are no longer sensible or canny

You were saying « by invitations and dinners
We would discover the true secret

The forms we saw were not unfeasible
We were neither dreaming nor imagining

Whether angel or human
Whether boy or the gender of a woman

Here we have their rings
We have brought them as signs

If you do necromancy really
These are the rings, do identify the owners clearly

The yellow-eyed and cunning witch
Said : « Give me the rings without a hitch

So tonight to necromancy I resort
And tomorrow the owners I will spot »

Siti removed her ring immediately
To the age old woman she handed quickly

Zin said this to Hayzabon
My heart has become a quagmire of blood

As the quagmire comes to boiling
When it is full to overflowing

This ring calms down the miserable heart
Now and then I put it before the suffering eyes

Beware ! Should you take the rings
Bring them back fast, for us sad hearts

Because with them we are patient and enduring
For me it is the Solomon ring

18. The granny goes to the fortune-teller

That shapeless and cunning old bag
Reached the fortune teller in the morning

Paying one piece of gold to the elderly
She related quite earnestly

Saying : « I have two impeccable sons
But poor, deprived and orphans

On the New year and the feast day
They too behaved in a childish way

Both arose and went to the picnic
Friends in the meadow misled them

Returning home today
Mad, senseless, crazy and love-giddy

Coming back naked without clothing
Sometimes crying and sometimes groaning

Falling unconscious, acting terribly
On coming to, looking crazy

These rings they had in their fingers
It would seem that they are intoxicated

O, code cracker and secret decipherer
I beg a solution, you are the solution finder

Do it out of charity, look at it carefully
What is hurting my boys so horribly ?

is it madness, epilepsy or passion ?
What is the malady, what is its medicine ?

O, instructor and guide through the future
Untying the knots, solving the problems

Can there be a secret in a ring ?
Is it known by you, farsighted one ?

Say, who are the ring owners ?
Are they jinns, elves, or human creatures ?

19. The fortune-teller performs the task

That inheritor of Daniel's learning
As he looked at the fortune forming

He could see into the wombs of the mothers
He could tell who would give birth to daughters

He who could see all sides together
He now saw Tajdin and Siti together

He saw the picture of joy and that of sorrow
He saw Mem and Zin as if they were before him

Thus he talked to the old messenger
The deliberate liar, deceiver and falsifier

Does it ever occur to you
That without the truth the Mansion³¹ is unattainable ?

You were saying My sons have been mad
You do not tell me they are Siti and Zin

The day they went to the picnic and the excursion
They saw on the road two pictures too good to be true

They saw two boys, each with high stature
They saw the boys enduring a hellish torture

Presently those two suns
Were attracted to the two moons

Those by their love became mindless
These by their beauty became senseless

That is the attribute of the love affliction
That is the thirst of the source of passion

To those boys belong the rings
They too in their fingers have your rings

Just as those were made up as boys
These were dressed up as girls

31- The mansion : heaven.

The old woman said to the master Sooth-Sayer
Knowing the truth, I am no longer a doubter

But do say : what family are they ?
Uncover well whose descendants are they ?

Are they nobles and high statured ?
Are they of elite or common kinships ?

The master said « In the religion of loving
There is a sale based on mutual consenting

It is admissible in the absence of equality of position
That merely the consent be the contractor's condition

Particularly in the case of boys so noble
One is a pearl, the other a solitary jewel

One is a noble, a descendant of a princely family
One is by kin the son of the State Secretary

That witch, as a test
Again spoke a word as a pretext

Saying ‘The lovers, insane and afflicted
With Siti and Zin infatuated

Are not subject to accounts
Are not listed in registers and note-books

Master, you know this is Jizir city
All is princely-Kurd and nobility

Lift the veil charitably
Kindly tell us the identity of the two angels

My pledge is that once I know
I shall fetch forty pieces of gold for you ».

The master said « Go and see various quarters
Inspect places and council chambers

If anyone is as ill as you say to be
The illness is a clue to find him

Disguised in the shape of a physician
You could see the lovers without suspicion

As you see those angelic characters
Like garments revealing the purchasers

Especially as the rings they are wearing
Each has Siti and Zin's engraving

The old woman proceeded as Lokman the physician
Loaded from head to foot with drug and medicine

The flask and ink pot, the bags and lancet
Were carried by one with devious garment

Some books in her breast pocket showing
As a strange physician appearing

She reached the servants quarters presently
And became the confident of the lovers immediately

They said : « Where do you come from, tell us who you are
Very likely an expert in a science you are ».

She said : « Though I may look like a physician
I am really a specialist in two ailments

I eliminate radically two kinds of pain
The physical pain and the spiritual pain ».

They said : « do tell us all
What types of illness befalls the soul ».

She said : « I hope you won't catch it
This illness has hidden symptoms

That is an exceptionally incurable disease
Recovery from that disease is impossible

O, boys ! I hope it stays away from you
It is a lightning in the shape of the beautiful

As a thunderbolt it strikes
Without flame, light or sparks

With no injury, sore or wounding
The name of the disease is Love

But it burns so much the insides
The heart blood pours down from the eyes

They told her : « Good Omen !
Two friends of ours have fallen

Treat them both, charitably
Medicate, somehow cure them, kindly

Whatever you say, we shall obey
Whatever you demand, we shall pay

The old woman reached the patients
And as she looked at the two dear ones

She told the companions and guides
« Leave me alone with the patients

In order to diagnose their illness
And prepare afterwards medical essence ».

All the colleagues left the two youths
And left the old woman alone with them.

20. The Granny talks to Mem and Tajdin

The patients suffering from the malady of love
Suddenly realised that their friends had gone

Opposite them a sinister woman was sitting
With a curly figure, a crescent resembling

Speaking calmly some words
As tears poured down her cheeks

They said « O, patient heart, tell us who you are
Why are you shedding hopeless tears ?»

She said « By the heads of Siti and Zin
It's for you I am crying only

Sent by Siti and Zin especially
I came to cure your malady

Here are your rings
I brought them as signs

Take them, and return the others rings
Do not give a bad name to Siti and Zin

I am the messenger and for me you are intended
My message, O, beloved, should not be rejected

As they heard the good news
They were so delighted that they lost their sense

They did not wait a minute to recover
Over her hands and feet they hovered

They reached for her hands, feet and garments repeatedly
Hundred of kisses the two youth were giving gratefully

The granny was moved by their longing
In sympathy, she started crying

Saying « Do not worry, O, desire and desired !
I bring good tidings in truth from the two worshipped

Success shall come from the Lord
Thus I shall arrange magically

That together you retire
All four shall be happy as you desire

Declare your names and those of your families
Clarify for me the secrets of your hearts

Therefore with these rings I shall return
And Siti and Zin I shall convince

Hurry up to get your reward
Come back quickly with the answer »

Tajdin removed the ring off his finger
And handed to Time's old creature

Mem thought that without the ring
How would he manage to live ?

He said « Granny ! You will excuse me
But how can I permit the soul to leave me ?

This ring is a name, nay a talisman
It is my soul, with the body as my mould

O, Granny ! You are the beloved's messenger, truly
The physician for my malady, certainly

As elms for Zin, the beauty possessor
Do not take this ring off my finger

She is my King³², I am merely a beggar
The favours of royalty are general

I am a slave unfit for connection
A parasite in the way of imagination

Satisfied I am with that much beauty
Bringing me to the recess of imagery

As she thinks of the heart affliction
Occasionally she might ask about my condition. »

32- the term used is king, not queen.

21. The Granny returns to Siti and Zin

The two pretty Juniper branches
Sitting as impatient buds

Bent, perplexed and deteriorating
Waiting every moment for the granny and hoping

Totally inebriated with love
Longing impatiently for the good tidings

Suddenly they saw the physician
Arriving in a strange condition

Love bewildered Siti and Zin
Quickly embraced the granny

Saying : « By God, O, patient heart
Did you, in any way, locate those angels ?

What did necromancy say ? Did you know the fairies ?
And did you see them in the crystal ball ?

The arrow which has pierced our hearts
Did you not discover who launched it ? »

She said « By your blessed heads
I swear not once but hundred times

From them I have just returned
Alas, about the boys we have been wrong. »

All the time Siti and Zin were saying
And hundred kinds of tears they were shedding

May I be your sacrifice for such perfection
Those two human beings, with such beauty

Such worthy ones you have chosen
Those proud ones are ornaments for any marriage

By God, I swear by all that's holy
Those two pearls you have selected

Are not found in any land, well or ocean
There are no such angels even in the heaven

Both are good matches for you
Princely they are, yet beggars to you. »

Old bag became wholeheartedly a marriage broker
She noticed that the lovers were speechless momentarily

Zin and Siti on hearing this news
Lost all sense of reasoning

In short : the sequence of events
Related carefully by the granny

Was akin to pouring oil on fire
The flames now reached the seventh heaven

While the body is Mount Taurus, love is fire
And the heart is that tree with light and fire

The cage is a niche, the spark is a torch
The spirit is oil, its wick is pain

The heart is a glass, the flame burns inside
The secret is a part, spread over the Whole

From head to foot completely
Burning with heart warming fire

They said : « For us you are the heart lightener
O, Granny ! For us you are the problem solver

Gardener you are, we are mere branches
Tongue you are, we ourselves are dumb

If for a moment you stop conversing
If for an hour you stop worrying

We shall become as the waste, like the thorn and the dred
And we shall be as the leaves, blown by the wind

O, knower of the ancient events
Without you we are forbidden secrets

You said that Mem with Tajdin
Have been manfully burning

They too are now eagerly waiting
Perhaps they are even more despairing

Rise, go quickly and tell Tajdin
If you want Siti and Mem wants Zin

Good tidings then, we do accept you
We are even unhappier without you

Your love is a halter we cannot hold
The veil of shyness guides our behaviour

Yet that veil is for you non-existent
Un-veiling is for you a custom so ancient

The matchmakers with ways and means
Anyone from you, we shall be welcoming

So speak to those lovers
And all the friends and suiters

Some to intercede on your behalf
Some to pray on our behalf

Perhaps God has ordained
That our union be attained. »

22. The Prince gives away Siti to Tajdin

It is a good time for the longing patients
Particularly for the tribe of lovers

A medicine for recovery and health
Good news and tidings of faith

Reaching suddenly the anguishing
And freeing them from suffering

That granny, playing the part of Aristotle
And disguised from head to foot

Again appeared in the shape of a physician
And presently reached the victims of passion

Good news, as we said, she conveyed
Those burning, like never before burned

But with that fire they brightened
They recovered, you could say, from their sickness

As if from the hand of Plato
Surely taking the medicine and the paste

They got up and went to their friends
Some companions and relatives

Informing them of what had happened
These responded approvingly and zealously

As they heard the really good news
Word was passed to the public and the match-makers

Some learned and some justices
Some ignorant and some princes

All stood up and went to the prince together
And this way they raised the matter

Saying O, ruler of the reign, property and the nation !
O, protector of the justice, State and religion !

The shade of the grace of God, you are
To-day our king and sovereign, you are

A sun you are and alchemy is your sight
A moon you are, your effect is full of light

Anyone you invite is exceptional
Anyone you ignore is unexceptional

Anyone you wished you made a lantern and lit
Even if he were poorly you made fit

Though Tajdin is a princeling
To you he is but a slave, a mendicant

We have come praying deeply
Before you we are all begging

Tajdin is asking the hand of Siti
That giant is refined by that lamp

He is a slave, kindly free him
He is worthy a brother-in-law make him.

The prince said : « Anything you deem suitable
Is for us perfectly acceptable

Who is the proxy ? Let him come and sit down
Who is the Mullah ? Let him read the sermon

We are marrying off Siti to Tajdin
This is the answer, « Accepted »... Amen

Cheko at once ran to the hand of the prince
And kissed it, thus acknowledging the acceptance

All the princes, the Sheikhs³³ and the Mullahs
The poor, the chieftains and the Aghas

Together expressed praises
All praying heartfully for blessings

The prince said « Play the timbrels and rebabs »
Bring in all the sherbets and wines

33- *A sheikh, among the Kurds, is a religious figure.*

Let us have a joyful party
To-day we are sure of, but not the morrow

Will it be as happy as this
Or will it bring death and sorrow ?

Pregnant are the nights, O, followers
What are they bearing, as successors ?

This mourning and feasting are twins
This wheel and orbit are untrustworthy

One moment, it is clear, the next it is darkening
One moment it is joy, the next it is mourning

When you find time for companionship
Do not miss the advantageous moment

Because the time is like the sword
It does not differentiate between a mullah and a lord

To-day for the satisfaction of Tajdin
Count with me as a matcher

For a long time he has been a servant
Always at serving he has been excellent

So long he has been in our service
That he has spent his life in attendance

It is a rule within the law of loyalty
That we too carry some burden in a difficulty

To-day we have to render him a service
Specifically to be at his service

A man of such fine quality
Who would not reward with magnanimity ?

If I have a thousand and one sheep
All booked in one day

If I don't sacrifice them entirely
May my princeliness pass without blessing »

Tajdin was in the presence of the prince
His happiness was at hand, yet concealing the delight

In short : the prince, notwithstanding his power
Rose and himself became the dispenser of delight

He drew into the council a dining tray
As if it were a layer of heaven

Round flat loaves as the moon and the sun in the sky
Were brought in to serve as bread

These silver and gold plates
Were like the upper and lower orbits

Every big dish was like a tower
With a pearl-shell above as cover

Every plate and china cup
Was a shining star full of light

The Capricorn and the Aries in the heavens
Turned into biryani and kebab for the guests

Every cup and dish as a store
Filled, to overflowing like inciting the soul

Various kinds of foods, buttered and sweetened
Different types of nourishment, and colourful desserts

The fine mugs and porcelain water-jugs
Were going round delicately

The continuing movement resembled a picnic
Anyone who witnessed was quite astonished

Pomegranates, citrons, oranges and lemon
Early fruits of the trees of heaven

Drink, vegetable, candy and white sugar
Zibad scenty musk, ambergis and rose-water

Some were taking a second helping
some were yet modestly drinking

Incense holders went around with aloes-wood and ambergis
To soak and wholly perfume the souls

Good music, fine tunes and worthy voices
Good clothes, brilliant colours and fair choices

Some with the sound of harmonious music
Some sonorous with the pride and coyness

Violin, lute and guitar with singers
Cymbal, timbrel, trumpet and dulcimers

Soprano, Lovers, Iraqi and Apogee
Together were rightly pairing

Tunes, songs and sections
Unscreened, miraculous and divination

Sprang seemingly from the sound of the flute
Invading religion, faith and the mind

Cup-bearers were confused by the grape water
Singers were crushed by the sound of dulcimer

Singers, lyrical poets and master of comedy
Intoxicated, drunk, melancholic and giddy

In short : despite the tyrannical orbit
The wedding was thus celebrated by the guests

From the planner of the orbit the pen fell
And the executioner acted as the pen fell

Venus at the earth was striking
The moon in the tropic of cancer was hiding

Saturn in the Acquarius was concealing
Jupiter in the Pisces was disappearing

The world wholly becoming companionable and joyful
The cruel orbit was so grieved and hateful

It was helpless and remained powerless
Inevitably « the old woman became a hay-thief

The senility of the blue-coloured orbit
Made the room for the feasty spirit

All the world was a joyous enclave
Urban and rural, freeman and slave

Engrossed in pleasure and blessing
Absorbed in celebrating and playing

And to the companions at the table the cup-bearers
Once again went around with glasses and tumblers

The Prince called on Mem and Tajdin
Saying : « The expenses I pay, Mem heads the wedding

He attired them both completely
They rose and kissed his garment politely

Then sat down and drank together
Passing that day with each other

23. Siti and Tajdin's wedding feast



The time of the new bride, looking as a sun
With nine domes as the same glass of Jem³⁴

Her face thoroughly made up
As if coated with gold

The hairdresser, the granny and the maids
As love generally warmed up the bazaar

Went to decorate Siti and Zin
To make coquettish the two beloved

They looked first at the ear-locks and moles
They realised that they plundered the souls

As they thought to improve the curves of the eyebrows
They blushed with embarrassment

When they looked at their pretty faces
They were shamed by the refined features

They found they could not use the black mascara
For it might mar the beauty of the Kheten gazelles

Comb coloured from head to feet
They tried hard to find an excuse

But in neither of the two gazelles
They could find even a single defect

Except the head of a hair, private and not revealed
But that too was an example neither physical nor spiritual

Out of fear of breaking
No belt had ever girdled their waists

No one even considered the use of the fasteners
For they might hurt the delicate features

And could one dye a hand or even a finger
With Henna³⁵ in a hard manner

34- *Jemsheed.*

35- *Henna is a dye for the body, derived from the shoots of a plant by the same name.*

A picture deemed chosen by the Lord
Who is able to have it altered ?

At last they gave up despairingly
A vain attempt to gild the lily

The beauty in the figure of each lover
Was a worldly gift like platinum and silver

Fortunate they were, their heads crowned
Shining, with jewels adorned

The front-plate of the fabricated sheet
Was decorated with silver and embossed with jewels

Thus was the radiance of their beauty enhanced
Like the crescent moon reflecting light

Diamonds, emeralds and pearls
Dark monograms, lines and moles

Arranged in the manner of couplets
Comparable to a book of poems

The resemblance was not by design, but unintentional
A splendour both miraculous and magical

The verses by collecting becoming a diwan³⁶
The texts by drafting becoming a Koran

That is the Absolute Master's craft
Anyone seeing it saying : « He is Right »

As the decoration of the bride was complete
The feast was transferred into the market and street

Various kinds of ornaments and garments
Different types of jewels and valuables

One hundred bond maids and one hundred slaves went
All with embroidered and golden clothing went

Camels by trains and diamonds by cantars
Rubies by loads and gold by sacks

36- *Diwan : a collection of poems.*

Beyond the multiple calculation
Extraordinary, exceeding booking limitation

This trousseau was beyond reasoning
The camels were overloaded

This luxury turned the decorous into lovers
Like an earthquake rousing the creature

Civilians, males and females
Well made up and attired

Like the sea waves moving
People were pushing in order to see

Mount Judi was open suddenly
Like a Noah's Ark, spilling generosity

And when they saw Siti's furniture arriving
The palace of fairies became a reality

Every piece of the main bedding was sandalwood
One bed frame was even made of ebony

A throne crowned with jewelry
Belkis³⁷ sitting there comfortably

Preceded by hands-holding servants
Wearing golden cummerbunds and jewel earrings

As if a hundred Asef Barkhiya³⁸, so light as air
Were portaging the throne as fair

Carrying on their heads that cradle
Passing it from hand to hand effortlessly

That fine bed was like a merchant man
The sea it was sailing through was human

A sea of love that was boiling
Was inevitably passion building

37- Belkis Queen of Sheba.

38- Asef Barkhiya : King Solomon's minister.

The inhabitants of the place turned lovers altogether
Moths and candles were connected with one another

Sufis and Mullahs, poor people and pashas
Together as watchers and spectators

Even people who were crying of sorrow
None remained unhappy

As the procession passed malevolent doors
Even the insincere and hypocrites

The bride made the same impression on all
There were none who did not like her

The music resurrected the dead like the bugle
The drum, tambourine, Kerranu and Nakor

The acclamation, the echo and the calling
Enriched the listeners with harmonies

A common sound swelled and rolled
Through the orbit palace and the heavens

Such life, splendour and activity
May never again be witnessed by posterity

The orbit realm in which the angels dwelled
The waves that in time vanished forever

This pomp, emblem and feasting
Moved forward and presently reached Tajdin

Tajdin himself, beaming like a sun
Mem next to him, like a moon

They sat in the high mansion
Surrounded by so many a chieftain

The stood up to watch
Holding trays in both hands

As big as the firmament of the heavens
With rubies and emeralds of all mines

They scattered the contents of those trays
Over the picturesque palanquin

And how those trays were full
With gold, silver, pearl and jewel

The happy looters got their hearts' desire
The poor became princes and pashas

Beyond even the hopes of a greedy pincher
Outside the capacity of the meanest collector

Far better than the generosity of the generous
More than the possessiveness of the villainous

So affluent became the destitute and the beggar
That the penniless became lusty and wowan-worshipper

The beggar and the poor, the rich and the wealthy
The sad and the glad, the sorrowful and the happy

One could no longer distinguish from appearances
You would say all were licensed princes

All fitting and agreeing
All shaking hands and embracing

In short, intoxicated with desire of the mind
Those places, roofs and mansions were enchanted

Some addicts and some drunkards
Singers, comedians and cymbal players

Every Botan addict and drunkard around
Was playing and springing in a merry-go-round

Dancing and singing to the music
Sweet, sugar-lips and candy

Virgin and beardless, lasses and lads
Houris and angels, fairies and boys

Rosy elders and opulent dressers
Sugar mouthed and sweet talkers

With tilted head-gears and golden cummerbunds
Moon faces and dark lines

Virgin bodies and silver skins
Apple chins and pomegranate breasts

Such soft hair and snaky plaits
Such fourteen year old and bridal eye-brows

Beardless juvenile and bare
Youth straight and fine as the ruby

Some with pleasant voices, some with fine complexions
Some racing and some limping

Despite « the old Woman »³⁹
Unlike the hunch-back

Girls who might be described so attractive
As stars in the Pleiades or like the moon

Some forming circles, some rotating
Some winding in chains, some moving

Their shining masses as galaxies appeared stars appeared
Seven days complete and seven nights

Siti's and Tajdin's wedding celebration
Went on in this decorous and lovely fashion

39- *The old woman : the season.*

24. Tajdin's and Siti's candles burn

The horizon, like the hem of a bride
Blushed, then turned golden with the rising sun

Which dispersed with its light the darkness
And banished all sorrow along with the night

Thus at dawn on the seventh day
The fire reached the oil, you might say

The fiery heat of desired vicinity
Removed the mist from the life of the lover

The secluded contact between love and passion
Drives a person to absolute frenzy

Love and passion become companions
Uniting the heart and soul in liaison

Patience consumed by separation
All longing for marriage and consummation

Storming at the passion gate
Ignoring the instructions « be patient and wait »

The passion of the lover and beloved was so intense
That they were almost dying of longing

The hairdresser, the granny and the nurse
Tajdin's close relatives and friends

Were required to satisfy all customary rime
In accordance with the religious meeting time

Therefore they brought the perfumes and the incense
Various cheering the mixings and the intoxicants

The glass, the cup and the wine flask
Aloes-wood, zibad, ambroses and musk

Rose-water, flower essence and perfumes for the night
In short : from moon to moonlight

Everything for living, energy and society
Articles of companionship, taste and felicity

Everything was assembled in preparation
It would have assured the dead's resurrection

Everywhere was decorated for the bride and the lord
The walls, the doors, the beds and the house

All the nobles and the servants proceeded
Together with some relatives and closely connected

The dancers carried the bride over their heads
Taking her to the bridal chamber

And placed her there, like a candle
Perfect, pure and beautiful

The candle, flickering and burning
Seemed to be saying to one struck speechless

« O, undecided and unreformed lover
If you are like me repentant

Get up, go to the bridal-chamber
And through kissing be in fetter

The bride, like a candle is burning
Like you, her body and soul are raging

As the candle do stop burning
Unlike me your tears should cease pouring

If a lover rises as a moth
spreads the gift and gives away your soul

O, long awaited Pilgrim
O, traveller, at the end of your journey

Your intended prayer-niche, the Kaaba
is within your reach, as decreed by the Adored

The House, the Stone, the Place and the Hijra
The Endeavour, the Demand, the Pilgrimage and the Umra⁴⁰

The Lord has determined for you
Here have been made available for you

Water you are, flow to the cypress
Lion you are, go to your den »

Tajdin, from the candle's illustration
The meaning of the beautiful's passion

Knew, through contemplation and realisation
Thus he moved with energy and acceleration

His friend in joy and sorrow, the poor Mem
Accompanied him as companion and an armed guard

Hand in hand and a heartening pal as ever
Acted as the janitor, with sword at his shoulder

As Tajdin entered the chamber
Mem stayed at the door with a prayer

The moment was fraught with danger
For lovers have many a hater

Whether lover or beloved
Each has his enemies and censors

Some are demons and some are fairies
Some are human hypocrites and some are fair

40- *The House, the Stone, the Place and the Hijra, the Endeavour, the Demand, the pilgrimage and the Umra Mecca and the ritual acts.*

25. The meeting of the bride and the bride-groom

Politely, the bride-groom entered the chamber
The bride, a candle screened behind a veil

Stood-up to receive him delicately
Picking up the hem from the floor, gently

Gracefully tucked up her ear-locks
Removed the veil with her hands

The face shining like the Aqsa Mosque
Was revealed and illuminated like the moon

The bride-groom, suffering the separation and affliction
Longed for the intimacy with that pretty soul

And as a first step in permissible behaviour
He laid his hands on the decanter

From a sugar-lipped decanter sipping
Raising the cup to his lips, imbibing

Thus intoxicated, warmed by the limpid wine
He smelled the ear-locks and the face so fine

One moment, a narcissus, a tulip or a red-rose
Another, a basil, a violet or a corn-ear

Embroiled together, together embracing
Sometimes kissing and sometimes biting

They were kissing so much
They could not kiss in turn

And teeth as diamonds and jewels
Changed into coral and pearls

The sea of love was boiling over
Hand on the neck, lip on lip and embracing

they were so delirious with that wine
Rising unconsciously and falling down

They were unable to continue sitting
They rolled over for prostrating

After rising from prostration
Both feeling the exhilaration

They snatched sugar from each other's lips
Gathering red roses from each other's cheeks

Making for themselves sugar and flower sherbets
Their two hearts entwined together

For three days and nights together in time
Those thirsty lips were sipping from the wine

Drinking the syrup of the excellent spirit
Yet their longing was still not satisfied

This was a new type of intoxication
And drew them into perfect confusion

And with flushed faces and transparent bodies
They were really enjoying their nuptial feast

Delirious and in each other's arms gathered
United on the floor and disordered

At times entwining and at times separating
At times swinging together and at times trembling

At times they were two, and at times one
At times a pair and together and at times separate

The ivory arrow was right on target
The target was like a refined shell

As the target was receiving the arrow
Pearls were exchanged with coral

Though the arrow returned, the seed stayed inside
He was giving her his seed with heart and soul

Continuing through the days and nights
They entwined in the act of love

The two the rebellious drunkards together
Were giving love to each other

Whether in the light of the day or in the darkness of the night
These two angels were enjoying their delight

You would say they were two alchemists
Busying themselves with necklaces and jewels

As their bodies and souls united
Two spirits together were amalgamated

The bowl lowering the ewer descending
The alembic lifting with beating

The mixture, like milk and sugar
The combination, like the life and water

They had neither nourishment nor quencher
Forgetting all about bread and water

That week was spent wholly in the nuptial chamber
They had forgotten the existence of everyone

Good health had overcome their malady
Sorrow had vanished, eclipsed by unity

Inevitably, on the dawn of the eighth day
Rizwan⁴¹ left paradise and walked away

Mem was still at the door, guarding
His head was always on the stone, leaning

His home was still the courtyard
Day and night he had been on guard

As Tajdin appeared from the nuptial chamber
You could say a sun rose for Mem

At once he was with joy overwhelmed
Elated, as if he were on top of the world

41- Rizwan the gardener or gatekeeper of the paradise, meaning the bridegroom Tajdin.

Should you have a friend like that, let him be
if he were not like that, then let him not be

For a friend who stands by you
A hundred treacherous and hypocritical relatives

Sacrifice, and do not say who ever
Useless is even a malevolent brother

A friend is a brother to you
He is like your eye, and a torch, too

26. Bekir incites the Prince against Mem and Tajdin

When God from nought created the existence
And newly founded this universe

The sum of the world's constituents
Even the essence of human species

Things in accordance with qualities and actions
Were brought into existence in various conditions

He created together and thus had prescribed
That a thing by its opposite was known

This earth and heaven, the slow and rotating
This realm and reign, fixed and moving

The light and dark, infidelity and faith
The immortality and fire, heaven and hell

Cold and hot, wet and dry
Prince and slave, rich and poor

Soil and air, fire and water
Night and day, shade and sunshine

Separation and connection, delight and sorrow
Life and death, joy and grief

Some resemble the light, and some resemble the fire
Some are clement, and some are violent

Those truthful, straight and charitable
Those crooked, liars and shamefaced

Those people of hell and suffering
Those worthy of heaven and rewarding

Don't you see they are all opposites
Where lies the wisdom ? Why are they inter-connected

Because if there were no contradiction
Distinction is impossible as well as recognition

In short, fulfilling this requirement of creation
The Prince, possessor of glory, dignity and perfection

Had appointed for himself a doorkeeper
A « son of a bitch », a notorious mischief-maker

Always at his service as door-keeper
A cunning castle-gatekeeper, and coffee house keeper

By ancestry he was not a Botan man
Perhaps he was born of Sin

It was said that he came from Mergevir
A sheer evil man and a malicious instigator

The name of that hypocrite was Bekir
Perhaps he was worse than Belukiya⁴²

Evil, unstable and falsifier
An informer, a framer and deceiver

The devil was a pupil of his portent
Botan was shamed of his intent

He was as ugly as a nightmare demon
An evil doer, wicked and dissembler

Tajdin was telling the Prince, ever :
My Prince ! Sack this doorkeeper

He is not worthy of your door
He is a dog, secret-leaker and vindictive

Although dogs and doorkeepers are brothers
At least most dogs are affectionate and loyal

The Prince used to reply in this way to Tajdin
Do you suppose we are unaware of Bekir's work

We Princes resemble the mills
Full of moves and twists, advances and retreats

Inevitably we need a miller
Unavoidably we require a doorkeeper

42- *Belukiya : a notorious trickster.*

While we run the government,
Sometimes we practise justice , other times tyranny

Although Bekir is a bastard
Our mill through him turns and prospers

This clique of the wicked and oppressors
Consists of the bailiffs, police and doorkeepers

They turn the mills of oppressors
And grind the grains of grievances

Though our mills are public endowment
The throat is full of forbidden millet

That millet is planted by a ploughman
And shall be harvested by the same ploughman

This custom is practised only by princes
You do not find it in the domain of the poor

All the guards are like dogs
They also form the clique of doorkeepers

The unwilling Lord on the Throne
Is not seen managing the work

However much he created sultans
He created ten as many satans

In short : the prince does not abandon his dog
The explanation is that it is simply a necessity

There are princes who would not exchange
One of these bare dogs with ten Arab horses »

That spiteful and wicked schemer
That is Bekir, the willful forger

Was secretly afraid of Tajdin
Always hateful he had been

As this feast started happily
And proceeded formally and customarily

Concealed from the people as the devil
His purpose just as lying and evil

He said to the prince, confidentially :
« My Prince ! You wasted Siti, certainly

That jewel of the crown and the crown jewel
That silver star and the star silver

So much worthy of the throne, so much learned
So much wise, graceful and adorned

Chosroes fell for her maddeningly
Fakhfor⁴³ loved her deeply

The Czar had wanted her for his son
And Khaqan⁴⁴ would have come along begging

It was unworthy to be satisfied so cheaply
And give her to one so loosely

The prince said : « Would I exchange, O, bad star
Tajdin and Mem with a throne and a Czar ?

The day war broke out and in the battle dash
Tajdin and Mem captured two hundred Qizilbash⁴⁵

With armour, arm and shield
Bringing them before us with the sword, the six-leaved

Who is Khaqan ? What do I do with Fakhfor ?
I will not exchange them with a, quarter of the world »

The cursed, sensing that his words made no impression
Resorted to willful misrepresentation

Saying : « Fine indeed is the truly noble
Compared with the friendship of the servant

The day they drink the wine of calamity
As they eat kebab and honey

43- *Fakhfor* Emperor of China.

44- *Khaqan* King of Turkistan.

45- *Qizilbash* : Religious sect.

What they display at feast and serenity
They will also do in crisis and difficulty

If nothing were to change them incidentally
And if they were not to alter manifestly

And if they did not carry out any disloyal action
And never abated in their resolution

Then this tact and harshness must be equalised
And the sincerity and loyalty must be equated

Indeed the benevolence of the generous is wasteful
If directed at the unworthy and the evil

Nobody is against the youthful or the wealthy
However the Nouveau riche is not fit for glory

The perceptible for the nouveau riche is wine
For unpleasant is the drunkards intoxication

It requires a lot of wisdom and a lot of toleration
Lest the Nouveau rich is changed by intoxication

My prince ! You did not notice the son of Iskander⁴⁶
Looking at you and crossing the border

The day you gave away Siti to Tajdin
He, on his part, to Mem gave away Zin

The prince commented « How come he did not ask me ?
Or no, is he no longer afraid of me ? »

He said « Don't you know the scion
Noble, young and a champion

He has been in the arena, with a loose halter
Anything he may do seems proper

I fear he may be arrogant and mean
He may exceed the bounds with Zin

And claim to be Khalid's relation
The purpose of ancestral claim is promotion

46- *The son of Iskander : Mem.*

The prince said « At heart we had a desire
To ennable Zin with Mem, the esquire

I swear by the soul of my father
All the way to Khalid, the ancestor

To no male descendant of Adam's
Shall I even give Zin in matrimony

Anyone who is bored with his head
Here is Zin ! Let him go ahead

The brave, fed up with his body and soul
Should be so fearless as to make Zin his wedding goal.

Rulers visibly and secretly
Are like fire, undoubtedly

They seem fine and divine, visibly
Yet they are barely managing, invisibly

When merciful, they resemble the sun
When coercive, they burn the world

Beware, do not trust them, ever
Even if they were a father, a cousin or a brother

Particularly if bad associates
Come near them, may God protect us.

27. Zin in love

As Tajdin and Siti were enjoying their happiness
The marriage freeing them from loneliness

Mem alone stayed in the lonely corner
With no friend, co-sufferer and co-habiter

Unable now to spend time together
Deprived from sharing his sorrow, with a co-sufferer

How could the sufferer endure ?
How could he entreat the happy ?

Both the glad and sad require partnering
The plights and afflictions require healing

The fellowship of the lovers is calmness
The food of loneliness is madness

They comfort each other and converse
Especially those with a common problem to face

Siti and Zin, Mem and Tajdin
Managed together and were comforted

When Zin was crying of affliction
Siti's voice was soothing as medicine

As Mem was heartily moaning
Tajdin nearly became as a physician

Now these two separated from the other two
Happy with their desire they went their way

Mem and Zin remaining unfulfilled
Aimless, desireless and hopeless

For forty days Zin stopped eating and drinking
She never ceased crying

The heart blood becoming food and nourishment
The tears themselves becoming water and sherbet

During the day and when the night came
Her separation suffering was just the same

She cried in the daytime and moaned in the night time
So changed that moon and so weakened

The fullness of her face turned into a crescent, merely
Her appearance was an image, only

The friends, companions and guests
The graceful, the trusted and confidants

Were always telling her gently :
« O, the cypress of the lofty orchard

O, green vine-leaf of the valley !
Why are you pouring down so many tears ?

If it is the elder sister's separation from you
She went well, and happy with her friend too

She opted for patience and seized opportunity
There she is glad, here you are sad

Henceforth, put away sorrow from your heart
Become like the ear-lock before the wind

Turn the dark hair into ringlets
As a flower open the rose-coloured face

Open up the ear-locks and let them free
With a wreath as a crown on the forehead

Separate the side-locks from the red hair
Comb the ear-locks, expose them to the air

So that the wheat-ear and the red-rose be acquainted
The basil and the violet singly be threaded

Stir the side-locks over the crescent
Enamouring in Mecca the Bilals⁴⁷

Pour again refreshing wine into the glass
Open the hair knots that veil Kaaba in black

47- *the Bilal : the prayer caller of the Prophet Mohammed.*

So that people from the east and west as far as Damascus
As pilgrims can see the shrine

So connect together your side-lock with the mole
And ribbon your beauty book with the cord

Let the beauty of the face be enhanced
Allow the verses of God be ordered

So that both the communities of infidel and Islam
May believe in the texts of Koran

These winks and blood-boiling looks
These daggers and sharp knives

Beware, do not give them any licence or permission
They have no mercy for anybody or compassion

Allow the murderous hair ringlets
To rule over the kings and sultans

Remove the veil that screens the flowers
Look at the impatience of warblers

Let your smile be as a bud
So as to plunder the epic nightingale

Intoxicate the ear-lock with the neck
Stun the mad, the crazy and the insane

Excite the Mullahs with dalliance and coyness
Goad the Sheikhs before the swines

Permit the side-lock, the ear-lock and the mole
To spread word amongst the people of the states

So the pathless and perplexed guide
May not be giddy as the beast

To deny the absolute perversion
And to believe in the true way

Deprived of the revelation of glory
Satisfied with the image of beauty

Annihilating that existence
Everlasting with that evidence

This advice they were offering
But Zin would not be soothling

On the contrary, perhaps due to this advice and counsel
She fell totally under grief and bondage

Love is fire, advice is a breeze
Discretion is a veil and scandal is blameworthy

yet although they were reproachful
She felt even more regretful

Tears did not give a rest to the eyes
Moaning did not give a respite to the mouth

This would have spoken a word
Or that would have looked at a place

The advisers found that talking and preaching
Were in no way helping

They were perplexed by that moon
Why did she moan so much ?

They thought that Zin
Was only crying for Siti

When they saw that words were mere air
They shut their mouths and left in despair

28. Zin addresses the sorrow

Zin stayed alone, nay, with sorrow for company
The sorrow gathered around her and she said :

« O, friend of the hopeless
Helper of the alienated

Malady of the suffering heart
A veil that hides the secret of the miserable

Confidant of the wounded heart !
Slumbering companion of my sad memory !

The dining colleague who joins me at an empty table !
Drinking pal when I take even a drop of bitter wine !

Through you lovers attain beauty
Through you wayfarers achieve glory

The ruined heart has remained so deserted
No one but you has cared and visited

Like those claiming the world's possession
We give you our absolute permission

Thanks to you for any luck in this world
And for dignity at the palace of the End

That is why we like sorrows, they are loyal
They don't say, this is bitter or even lethal

They are on a dark day friends of the soul
Friends also in happiness and joy

Both worlds of the « sooner or later »
Without sorrow would they materialise ever ?

In short : my heart is gladdened by sorrows
And what becomes of the heart without the treasury of sorrows ? »

29. Zin reproaches Siti

Sometimes she addressed Siti
This is how she reproached that angel

« O, the soul and the heart throb of Zin !
The light of the clear sight and mad

The friend in joy and alienation
Of the same flesh, bone, blood and skin

Sister with common wings and common minds
And common wombs, nest and leaves !

O, disposition which coincides with mine !
Except in fortunes that undermine !

A thousand thanks that luck befriended you
What you desired, the Giver gave you

A thousand thanks that luck was helping
Your fortune started ascending

If my luck has turned bad excessively
This fate is fine with me exceedingly

The sorrow was allotted to me definitely
Thus ruled Eternal Destiny surely

The joy was for you, the sorrow was for me
Tajdin was for you, Mem himself was for me

Because Mem takes the shape of sorrow
So sorrow comes for me on the top of sorrow. »

30. Zin addresses the candle

At times, she considered the candle a companion
Saying : « O, friend, associate and confidant

Though you are like me in burning
You are unlike me in talking

If like me you too were talking
I would not be so much lamenting

Between my suffering and yours there is a difference
From the West to the East extends this difference

You are as the East, your fire is visible
I am as the West, my fire is invisible

Burning the nerves of my soul continuously
But burning you only occasionally

The flame in my heart is a brand
Yet my soul is at war with the brand

Over the top your flash is showing
As passion loosely appearing

That flash is for you a tongue
But the flame is for me damaging

Yet the flame in my heart is sacred
It even rules over the shrill wind

Though at night awake you are staying
In the morning till the evening you are sleeping

At night, at dawn and in the evening
I always go on burning

31. Zin talks to the moth

Occasionally, owing to the heart injury
Her soul was inevitably weary

She was not dismayed by her deep sorrow
She would talk to the moth as companion

Saying « O, bird of the nest of separation !
O, nightingale of the orchard of combustion !

O, proof of the true lost lovers !
O, banisher of the false claims !

You forgive the cheap soul nobly
A pity you tremble at death

You don't tarry a while for passion
Immaturely you demand annihilation

That haste is for you a defect
That tremble is for you a weakness

You are impatient, restless and weary
Because you exhaust yourself quickly

Immaturity is a shame really
The cooking is said to be raw actually

The ripe they burn, but do they ever
Vanish with light and fire ?

The remaining wander like the salamander
The body spiritually, turns lighter

That body, as luminous as the soul
That blinding while of the pre-revelation

Not one atom on earth and in heaven
Would she leave out of conversation

With people who were self-interested
She was cautious or avoided

She neither meddled with the humans nor with jinns
She entrusted her secrets only to those tongueless

She was drowned in sorrow completely
Engraved on her heart and soul was Mem's image only

32. Mem's misery

Mem too ached for the face of the beloved
Out of his desire to see her

Becoming mad, heart-broken and dizzy
Love sick, quite insane really

The serene mind often bewildered
Genial, yet lonely at heart

Unable to stand the agony and affliction
Incapable of walking through the rose garden

In short : without attaining union with Zin
He felt wounded and became restless

Because two thirsty lips
Were longing for a sip of water

To rain down from heaven, suddenly
As the water of life and timely

For a thirsty one attained the heart's desire
And a burning one remained on fire

One gaining eternal life
The other going through extended death

As Tajdin attained the union
Mem became truly depressed

He did not recover from the affliction
He refused to be consoled by any person

He could not stay in any place calmly
He had no one for solace really

Whenever he went to the prince
You could say both his feet were in chains

Suffering every moment and groaning
Spreading fire to the surrounding

Whenever he stood before Tajdin
Miserable, with his heart moaning
He could not associate and converse
He could not relax or fraternise

33. Mem addresses the Tigris River

Unavoidably he began to wander
As a fellow sufferer, to the deep river

Saying « O, the analogue of my love, flowing !
Impatient, restless and loving

Intolerant, unsettled and restless
Or are you also, like me, mindless ?

There is no rest for you, absolutely
There is a lover in your heart, presumably

What is it you always remember ?
As through Jizir you wander

If this city were your beloved
Then it has returned to you as required

Home is always on your mind
The neck, with your arm, you surround⁴⁸

Still you do not think of God
Daily, a thousand times, you forget to give Thanks

You cry so much and call
Then what do you aspire as your goal

Why vainly for assistance you are calling
Why to the land of Baghdad you are migrating ?

Whether I cry or ache
Whether I die or age

Anything I may do is rightful
For only annihilation is truthful

Look at my heart and wander
And to the depth of my soul and ponder

Why is the suffering of my heart incurable ?
Why are the tears of my eyes inexhaustable ?

48- *The neck with your arm you surround the Tigris is going around the town.*

Insane I am, I released the fairy
Tigris I am, I abandoned Zenber

Westan, Nergis and Saqlan
Derwez, Omeri and Meydan⁴⁹

As these picnic sites you are touring
Alone in the prairies and the deserts I am roaming

49- *Zenber, Westan, Nergis, Saqlan, Derwez, Omeri and Meydan* : fine places
the Tigris is passing through.

34. Mem addresses the wind

Sometimes to the Eastern wind he was talking
Telling the gentle breeze his heart's suffering

Saying : « O, fair matter resembling the spirit
The gate of the body is open for you

I beg that you proceed without interruption
Hurry up without hesitation

Once to « the gate of happiness⁵⁰ » go
One moment to the « Tree of the End⁵¹ » go

First kiss the courtyard
Then go to the heart-land

But, modestly, and with veneration
Quite respectfully and honourably

Pray for her quietly
Address her praisingly

Show your respect unsparingly
Greet her, standing, with folded hands

Move forward purposefully
Do not slow down disdainfully

This letter written with my heart's blood
The page black like the pupil of my eye

Don't move the veil for beauty's sake
Just the petition to her take

Beware ! Don't disturb her veil
As she reads the letter

Address her, from me : « My king⁵² ! »
« The source of my life and my prayer niche ! »

50- *the gate of happiness* Zin's apartment.

51- *The tree of the End* where the Prophet Mohammed talked to God : Zin's room.

52- The term used is again the King and not the Queen.

You are the manifestation of the light of the Lord
You are the source of the clear river

The divine visage and aspect
Slave are we, you are King

Distinguish yourself, by being just
With respect to us be fair and equitable

With that inner eye
That reveals the truth to the heart

That is an old prerogative of kings
That reveals the truth to the heart

That is an old prerogative of kings
That they look after the sinful commoners

By God, I know not of what sin I am guilty
But that I had a heart, of that I am sure

That heart the fairy kidnapped from me
For some time it has been separate from me

While it was with me in unison
It was possessed by infatuation and passion

Perhaps due to error or insubordination
A man is born with defects and omissions

He has sinned a hundred times and more
But thanks to your ear-locks he is safe, for sure

Your sadness is for him punishment
But your forgiveness is a wonderful gift

Talk in this manner, O, sharp Eastern wind
Then kiss the earth and rise

O, Eastern wind !For the sake of the adored
As you leave the presence of the intended

Beware ! Some of the soil of the door
Bring for me as fellow traveller

The dust that looks like tutty
Bring with you as alchemy

35. Mem reproaches his heart

Sometimes he was fighting with his poor heart
Saying : « O, traitorous, shameless and perfidious
Where is the word, decision, promise and bond ?
The oath, swear, faith and pledge ?
You were saying « Truthful I am with you »
You were saying : « United I am with you »
You were saying : « One heart I am with you »
You were saying : « Patient I am with you »
A pity ! That you are disloyal excessively
Alas ! That you are alienated impossibly
A spurious heart, at heart an enemy !
Full of twists, bad, crooked and greedy !
O, parrot that is sweet but can only imitate !
O, child that is but and immature babe !
Were you a friend in the joyful days merely ?
Or were you a heart of darkness only ?
O, heart ! How lonely is the self
Is it fair to leave the lonely alone ?
This nightingale of the soul caught in the prison of the body
Has remained alone resembling a sieve
Is it fair to maltreat the soul ?
And bar the door to the goal ?
The soul's secret which you are keeping
Like the light in the world, is a gift of heaven
O, heart ! Without the soul's torch don't go away
It is dark and as blind, you shall lose the way
If a lover is for you intended
Your lover is already part of your soul

Because you are self-exemplar of the soul
A mirror of the image of the attribute

Beware ! Do not go after the by-gone story
Don't let the soul disown the body

Your going resembles dissentioñ
Your departure is like rejection

Do not dissent, to ensure entering
Do not depart, to ensure arriving

Do not reject to be a good Sunni
What is the matter with you ? Woe to you, you are of me

Be firm, keep your place in the queue
In order to cognise the secret of « Who knew ? »

Though you knocked on the door of a kin
Yet the kin is with me « in the skin »

The figure you have loved is but a gallow
The ear-lock attracting you is the rope of the gallow

The attraction snatching you is the soul's keeper
The secret you are sacrificing is itself the owner

Do not trust ear-locks and moles
Do not let our property be plundered

Don't be fettered with the ringlets or plaits
Don't be giddy with the curves of the eye-brows

Though a bosom you are, o afflicted Sire !
May your flower garden be on fire

A hundred thousand nightingales like you
Wailing hundred times and crying too

And like the moth before the roses
Always burning and suffering with plights

O, heart ! You have opted for infatuation
Your purpose is to attain felicitation

But from the true love physician
I know what is good for your condition

Abstinence in the realms of desire
Piety in the field of pleasure

That disagrees with the fancy
That itself is for you the remedy

I have enquired from Lokman without doubt
About the properties of the sherbet and Turkish delight

Anything sweet is the illness exactly
Anything bitter is the proper medicine

Thus he talked to his heart
Unavoidably the heart responded with pity

Smoke caused by the heat of the heart
Rose, filling the melancholic part

The smoke and the fume went up again
Darkening the head, the nose and the brain

The image in the mirror became distorted
The picture in the mind was altered

You would think a cloud from the earth was rising
Ascending in the sky and gathering

That cloud started so severely
Raining down tears very heavily

So much was the torrent raging
As if it were a lake overflowing

In short : from the illness in his heart
A torrent was jostling Mem about

Shat Al-Arab, Euphrates and Ceyhun
As if all three flooded in unison

Although from poor Mem's tears
Poplars grew by the rivers

All the desert blossomed as a meadow in an orchard
And the shore became a rose garden and a flower bed

There, he who lost heart settled down
There, the nightingale soul built its nest

Though the nightingale was full of infatuation
Its body was but a prison, nay a cage

The feathers and wings drooping
The sinews and body were shrinking

His figure, looking like a pine tree
Turned with sorrow to juniper

His face that was always fresh
Became as the hyacinth, but yellowish

An accident happened, tarnishing the mirror
From the Erjeng painting, vanishing the splendour

Infatuation so much sickened that afflicted one
Love so much weakened that bewildered one

That his face had no more colour or water
He lost his speech and could not answer

In the beginning he fell sick by the river
Fully forty days he dropped to wither

The wisdom, zeal and the feeling of the human
The sense, movement and the strength of the animal

All traces of these totally disappeared
Not one particle in the wounded Mem remained

36. The Prince goes to hunt

The hunter of the worthy news and chaser⁵³
Told us of the journal of the time recorder

Saying : « One fine day in the season and days
On the late cycle of the perishing orbit ways

He who furnished destiny with the capability of creation
Had made the earth like the heaven

The quality comber had made up
The old world like a picturesque bride

Every valley, mountain and plain
Had become as a corner of heaven

Every meadow, as the great Eternal garden
Every water stream as the Kawsar river

Every mountain as Mount Sinai of Moses
Sparkling with the light of revelation

Every river was like a mighty snake
Every green was like a miracle of the rod of Moses

Every tree as the abundance of the new spring
All radiating with the light of the Lord

Every flower was as the Tur fire
A faultless torch, much brighter

Every bird was an orator at dawn
Every parrot with turtle-dove as companion

Every palm calling out every moment
As the Tree saying : « I am the God »

The hares and gazelles, wolves and deer
The duck and goose, partridge and pheasant

Herd after herd feeding in the mountains and plains
Flock after flock flying in the heavens

53- *The hunter of the worthy news and chaser the historian.*

In short as required by the time
It was the chance for fine living and enjoyment

To devote the season to rambles and picnics
And to hunt the beasts and birds

The Prince, whose command the orbit obeyed
Ordered : « Before the daybreak, the people of Botan must rise

And carry arms, iron, clubs and swords
To come with us for hunts

Anyone absenting from hunting
Shall die in the prison, and fettering

People even before the actual daybreak
Had prepared food and rugs

When the dawn appeared
The city resembled the day of doom

The princes released the falcons and the eagles
As lions taking tigers and greyhounds

Men, animals and beasts
No one stayed in the town at all

Wild and domestic, human and animal
Child and juvenile, miller and gardener

In short : all the tribe of Adam
In the whole : nobody stayed home

It looked like the Day of Judgement in he hunting ground
No one showed mercy to the innocent creatures

So many beasts they killed
That it was said no wild life survived

Beasts of prey, flying and wild birds
Were killed or entrapped and collected

Moving fast and youthfully
Those knights, Kurds and champions

Cut down the beasts with their swords
Annihilated birds with arrows

Popular as youthful heroes
Riders of Arab horses, possessors of halters

Holding sticks and bent rods in their hands
Hooking the necks of the gazelles

Those lion-like riders and warriors
Had shed the blood of the white tiger

So many gazelles they had hunted
So many tigers they had captured

That they could not bring them home
Perhaps they could carry no more

The poor took the ones which had been killed
The princes took the ones which had been captured

37. The garden of the Prince

Prince Zeydin had a garden
The Garden of Irem considered as a good omen

Each of its lofty trees and each bird
Was like a palace in the heavens and a houri

As for washing hands, feet and the face
Rizwan had channelled the Kawsar River

Friendly like the Sidre cypress
Every owl looking as an angel

Like Mem, true as the heart of the Pine
Embodying the love of a juniper

Oranges and lemons resembling Zin
Ailing of love and paling

Apples and dates, pomegranates and melons
Lips, chins cheeks and nipples

The Oriental plane-tree and the Shimshad
Provided shade and were quite comforting

Basils and violets newly opening
Golden cups, lips with wine dripping

The flow of the nectars and rivers
the whole variety of vegetables and flowers

The court of the orchard was generally like a book
Every part and piece looked like a section and chapter

As if a learned astrologer had politely
While going through the garden as a calendar

Had outlined brooks as molten silver
The ginger shades and delicate flowers

The wild tulips and basils lined the periphery
Green colours outlined against a musk background

Each manifesting a judgement
Showing the bad luck and the good luck

38. Zin goes to the Garden

That gazelle⁵⁴ of the wild hunt
That lady of the palace of amity

The crown gazelle of the plain of suffering
The bewildered one in the valley of the orchards and the roses

Shackled by the chain of the blood-thirsty love
The game that Mem had wounded

Saw that the town and the quarter were empty
The streets and surroundings were deserted

Deserted and unoccupied too, were the gardens and the orchards
With no humans or fairies in the squares or courtyards

She knew that treacherous was the time
Saying « Get up, heart ! It is a strange age

it is such a good chance to go to the picnic
To look at the beasts and the birds

Is there among them anyone co-sufferer
Because these humans don't know suffering

We have heard that there is a bird in the garden
Its luck is black, as the colour of the crow

And it is poor, weak and helpless.
Like the miserable face of the paling red rose

During the day it wails and cries
During the dark night on its own blood it feeds

it always weeps and screams
Its voice is like mine and nightingale is its name

A good friend, who suffers from the same affliction
Possesses a medicine for my apprehension

O, heart ! come along, we shall go secretly
Truly, we still have our life

54- *The gazelle :Zin.*

Perhaps advice and wisdom
Shall free us from the shackle and the boredom »

Thus she talked, and without hesitation
And without formalities Zin came to the garden

No one was aware of her sojourn
Neither the granny, nor the servant or companion

Her intention was not to seek company
She merely desired to be alone

So that fairy princess came to the garden
To seek justice for her affliction

Every tulip seemed to pierce the bosom
Every bud resembled a burning torch

No tree offered a comfort but seemed to oppress
The pomegranate blossoms scorched the heart

She found that she had a stone in her hand
A weight like the tongue of a bell

She sought warmth even from the cold marble occasionally
The heart of the stone was breaking from pity undoubtedly

When she looked at the flowing water
Tears of blood poured down her cheeks

Watering with the colourful water
The yard of the orchard for the nightingale's desire

The figure that was like a pine tree
with a face luminous like the sun

So treated the soil and the ground
pacing a while along the dusty land

So the earth cried « Ah » and the stones moaned
So the trees cried « Ah » and the leaves groaned

Whenever she exclaimed « O God » with suffering
Even the orbit mirror was grieving

The colour of the red rose brought her grief
The nightingale's song saddened her

Her own voice was nightingale's equal
Her rosy cheeks could make the red rose jealous

She gazed at the garden
With yellow flowers she made conversation

Saying « Oh like all lovers you are mad !
Like myself you are yellow and pallid

Your leaves are not one hundred but one thousand
Why are you yellow, weak and miserable ?

Are you like me, so sad
and full of sorrow like me without Mem ?

The nightingale is busy with the red rose
But, like myself, you have become a recluse

Like me you are ill and afflicted
Like me you are sad and good hearted

You are a fine indication
You and I are in a similar position

You had a sister as the red rose
For herself she chose a nightingale

For me she left a warbler
Orphan, deprived and unlucky

Full of regrets and unfortunate am I
Forsaken by that warbler, wilted have I

My face that was a purple-red flower
Turned sallow the shade of saffron

Oh if just once I could see my heart's desire
By God never would I utter « ah » again.

39. Mem too goes to the garden



Anything done, good or evil
without a propagator may not prevail

Be it woven of invisible threads or of a visible cloth
If it is not justifiable it will never be marketable

Justification can cover a number of symbols and situations
Perhaps sanctioned by the grace of the Possessor of Glory

Arise ! Your heart may be urging suddenly
Now is the hour, this is the moment exactly

That dignified mountain, that calm sea
Love may make light with lunacy

Thus it came to pass that Mem, patient and unlucky
Who was weakened excessively, his health poorly

The day people left the town
He found himself overwhelmed by his own passion

The patient was ill with love intoxication
Without a cure he reached a critical condition

The heart was sad and disturbed
At home he was perturbed

He found himself going out
With Khizir serving as his guide

What was Khizir, but the longing of the heart
What was longing but the loving of the heart

His heart had oppressed him
to the garden it goaded him

Ono dark nights Zin found herself brooding
Always sad, weeping and groaning

Praying to God ceaselessly
If Mem would visit her only

When suddenly she noticed Mem coming
The patient saw the Saviour arriving

Zin being in love and so happy
At once lost all her vitality

And fell unconscious in the garden like a flower
Her heart broke into pieces for her nightingale lover

Mem came and gazed at the flowers
he looked at the basil and corn-ears

Saying « O flower ! even as delicate as you are
When could you hope to be like Zin's face ?

O corn-ear ! your scent may be pretty
and may make the basil dark with envy

But you do not compare to the love-lock of my beloved
You are in fact officious and insensible

O nightingale, should you be of common state
The moth of the candle and the red rose

Compared with your red rose my Zin is brighter
Yet compared with your fortune my luck is darker

Nightingale I am, O well destined !
Impeccable, why should your name be decried ?

The flower garden produces not one flower only
But a hundred thousand in a spring yearly

Suppose there were many equal to my beloved
Though they may be houris and angers

There would never be suffering on their accounts
Even if they were to exist in many places

One exists or not, unique and exemplar
Like Zin and the Griffon, pure and honourable

How then could a lover manage ?
Without patience or death, can a cure be possible

Thus he talked to himself, unconsciously
When suddenly, Mem saw ahead of him

The muse that had troubled him
Zin, attended by two hundred fairies

That treasure lying on the earth
Whom the love drug had deprived of mirth

As soon as the heart-wounded Mem saw the girl
Zin resembling a sparkling pearl

He dropped instantly at her feet
As if the water had reached the cypress root

The bud⁵⁵ awakened from its dawn slumber
With its nightingale, it united

Saying « Is this a dream or an image ?
Is this dream real or false ?

In short : after a hundred imaginings
Ear-locks and moles possessor had appeared as reality

As Zin lured him with her scent
Like the hunter following his game

He found himself standing within reach of Zin's hand
And saw his two hands in Zin's hand

Both stood opposite each other, dumbfounded
Speechless, wordless, not even exchanging idle talk

First they made notions with their hands
Then as their tongues regained speech

They exchanged so much talk, together
Longing so much for each other

Tasting together so much sugar
Their lips sucking so much from each other

So many cups together the consumed
So many omitted prayers they consummated

Eyes, chest, neck, breast and lips
Face, chin, bosom and ears

55- *The bud : Zin.*

One after another, from each other were demanding
Sometimes giving out kisses and sometimes biting

They kissed with thirsty lips
They smelt each other's neck

Zin's face was that was as a candle burning
Was bright, luminous and longing

Mem, in a similar manner resembled a moth
Throwing himself, body and soul, at the fire

The fire of love was glowing
Zin was no longer in turmoil

Both were in a vulnerable condition
With no screen and no shelter

They saw in the garden a mansion
The mirror of a world in itself

They went and explored the halls
Sometimes sitting down, both graceful souls

Retelling the story of their separation
Recounting a tale with full emotion

Sometimes they were as a cloud, sad and crying
Sometimes they were as buds, nice and laughing

They adhered to every time honoured commandment
Be it a precept or a king act

Although formalities had been removed
They were reserved in their behaviour

Though they were hopeful of each other exceedingly
Yet they were not descending down excessively

The love in their hearts had no limit
But the limit of the grace was the waist

The love that had no limit in perfection
Like water that was pure at the source

Guarded itself absolutely
Would not admit any impurity
Beauty, spring, garden and beloved
What else in the world is desired ?
Especially when the love exists to conquer
And both sides have passion-thirsty lips
What else should I say ? I do not know
My tongue does not know what to say

**40. The Prince returns from the hunt and surprises
Mem and Zin**



Cupbearer ! Leave me alone as I am still handy
Drunk, wine-drinking and tipsy

As Mem and Zin drank
The wounded heart talked

We lovers may worship the wine
Yet we are already drunk with divine wine

It is not red as your wine
It is the grace of God

It is also the love of the beloved pure-self
A channel of the garden of qualities

Cupbearer ! For God's sake give me right away
A cup of wine that you served yesterday

To taste on sip only
Providing joy enough till the end, truly

It has high quality, a pure pleasure
A secret without a shadow or a spectre

Thus, one should put aside the past night's hangover
And wake up from sweet slumber

And not be caught like Mem inadvertently
To whom the Prince of Doom descends upon presently

Though I may be at the end of my life
I would not wish to be so unaware of my surroundings

Obliging me to put a beloved Zin
Between me and the cloak

The Prince came, accompanied by some troops
The zurna, the trumpet, the drum and the band

Led by the drum-beaters and the band players
A sergeant, an echoer and the caller of commands

Both lovers engrossed by the love trauma
Sick, opposite each other, in dilemma

Never comprehended the situation
Never paid the sound any attention

The Prince said : « Untie these gazelles
Do not shackle these beautifuls
Leave them in the garden as the birds at bay
So as we may watch them every day »

People carrying gazelles, wolves and hares
On their shoulders and their arms
Brought all and the prince filled the orchard
Like a shepherd filling the pen with sheep

The prince told the high ranking and the great :
« Advise your companions and acquaintances
To go and sit a while in the garden
Because we are so tired and worn »

They came to the gate of the high mansion
Noticing outside it and on its roofs no occupation

But as they opened the small door
Seeming a kind of fate's board of lot

Presently his eyes caught an image
And he knew something was the matter

The prince, dignified, wise and learned
Attended by Tajdin and Bekir

Entering the mansion where Mem and Zin were together
Listening to a voice that was coming as gold and silver

The prince came over and saw Mem, the poor fellow
Reclining on the yellow-threaded pillow

Pulling over his head a cloak
On an evening without a candle or torch

The prince said « Who is here at this time
And without my permission, at this place ? »

As Zin heard this, she recognised the voice
At once she hid under the cloth

Mem, not rising from his place, said :
« Your hunt burnt out my heart

My prince ! You knew I was sick
Until yesterday I was quite unconscious

Today we heard that the prince and the people
Went to the hunt together

I became impatient in bed
I got up despite these wounds

And left the house unavoidably
Finding myself in this place suddenly »

The prince said « On patients there is no restriction
So what did you hunt in this garden ? »

Mem replied « If I tell you, please believe me
For the almighty was generous to me

And in this garden I saw a gazelle
Really not a gazelle but a beauty

A white gazelle with black eyes
With black side-locks and a fine scent

Every moment a hundred loads of Tartar musks
Were raining down from the hair ringlets

If the Kheten desert were full of musk
It could not surpass that of her ear-lock and side-lock

Though she was white with black eyes
To me she was an angel

Before your arrival she was visible
But as you came she became invisible

Tajdin realised from the oratory
That Zin had secretly come to Mem

He said « Don't pay attention to Mem, he is insane
Afflicted, he has no brain

On hearing that talk, they turned away
All those present gathered together

Asking for a cupbearer, the wine and the candle
And held a princely council.

41. To save Mem and Zin, Tajdin sets his house on fire

Tajdin saw that the council was lively
Full of taste, pleasure and delight

Yet Mem was excessively downcast and perturbed
He went over to him and said: « Brother ! Are you disturbed ? ».

But he conveyed the query using signs
And Mem replied likewise using symbols

With his hand pointing at the sleeve of the cloak
Lifting it slightly, revealing a wonder

Tajdin could see two Tartar plaits
Like two heads of giant purple snakes

Crouching in Mem's bosom
Mem, himself, in awe and grief waiting

Recognising that the situation was desperate
He proceeded quickly and ran home

As he went through the door suddenly and angrily
Siti talked to him understandingly

Saying : « What is troubling you, O champion !
What is your hurry, who is your enemy ?

He said : « Get up, Siti ! It is already late
Today we are at war with this house

Save your child, this house will have to go
This house is for me, and here : the child is for you

Although this house represents the capital of my years
Mem and Zin are with heavy hearts

They are entangled in an awkward position
And I intend to ensure their salvation

Though people extinguish fire with water
I shall extinguish fire with fire

So in the manner of the nation of Zoroaster
he set his house on fire

As the house and possessions caught fire
He started calling and crying for help

Nations, tribes and clans
En masse hurried up to fight the fire

When the prince and his companions became aware
They deserted the palace and the orchard

As they also ran in response to the appeal
The accused⁵⁶ thus told his beloved :

do you see how Tajdin performed the task ?
Moses has for us dried the sea of sorrows

Rise and go to the Harem palace
So that I may respond to the fire and the calls

Zin rose and went to the private retreat
Tajdin had no more clothes, no more mats

Garments, ornaments and buried valuables
Possessions jewels and buried treasures

All he burnt for the sake of his brother
That is why his name lives on for ever

The property we possess, O Good Name !
Love of it gives the person a bad name

Beware, do not become the keeper of property
Because you will create inheritors merely

Its accumulation is a burden
Abandonment of it is a regret

The day you go before the Lord
With no property or treasure to hold

This heaven, and this visible shroud, cloth and face
O, bankrupt purchaser of the other life

56- *The accused : Mem.*

When will they be available to you
They will tell you « Get out », you are bankrupt

That is how it is in this perishing world
They don't give up one slice of bread

Do not leave property to your heirs freely
Because though you suffered to amass your wealth

The heirs would consider even a shroud too costly
So that not to buy and take the share only

Thus it is better to spend money to enjoy life
Better still to give it up for good deeds

Or spend it like Tajdin
To gain immortal fame

Or to exchange it for a good friend
These all are better than a thousand treasures

42. Bekir complains to the prince about Mem and Zin

The sultan of the land of Love
The chief knight of the province of bonhomie

As the source of purity
Sitting on the throne of hearts

When does he comdan the veil
Even if he does not display the flag

Emblem of the king of stars
Eventually lights from the fourth heavens

From many layers of the heavens
From those many places and distances

From those many elements and clouds
From those many obstacles and screens

Inevitably exerts influence, daily
And enlightens the world decidedly

This king, whose name is love
The day is his perfect measure

He also never conceals
And unavoidably tears down the screens

The secret in Mem's and Zin's hearts
The tune within the veil of love

As long as it was not mumbled by the tongues
It could not do any harm to the lovers

The torrent flowing from the tongues of unseemly people
Was unleashed and sung without harmony

Zin the sinless and Mem the faultless
Were denounced to the young and old

Bells in their mouths and bells in their ear-lobes
And Twisted fingers, made of cork

The lovers were sad and exhausted
People were as thirsty as Hussain of Kerbala

The councils were full of whispers
Going around on the passion of Mem and Zin

As if the burden of the camel were not enough
Winking amounted to bell ringing

That is the news of the two lovers
The gossipers, the jealous and the tricksters

Took every bit around the councils
Spreading it to so many prattlers

Until Bekir, a kind of devil
Grinding an axe, devious and evil

Was informed too of the situation
And that malicious rose from his position

Alone, he reached the retreat of the prince
In short : he presented a report on the case

The prince spoke rashly and with piety
And was drowned in a sea of thought and anxiety

He talked to that wicked hypocrite
Saying : « this news violates all honour

How shall we get to the bottom of the truth,
And elucidate the reality of the charge ?

He replied : « Order that Mem be recalled
As you both sit in seclusion

play with him a game of chess
Mem is a true lover, know that well

So stipulate « The heart desire » as the bet of the game
Then the truth of the secret shall be discovered

When you defeat him
Say : « Tell the truth, whom do you want ? »

Mem is proficient, a champion and a knight
Especially with you, he shall be forthright

He will not deny the love of his heart
He will reveal his secret, no doubt

His heart is fixed on this love
So he will say : « I love Zin »

Then you are the master of subtlety
You would see what is the right policy

Rulers belong to the race of the king of snakes
Possessing poisons and keeping seals

When they seal, know it is poison
When they like, know it is hate

The wise are cautious with the snakes
The inadvertent become lovers and beloved

No matter now greatly esteemed and valued you are
No matter how intimate and playful you are

Should you change partially
They turn their backs to you totally

Particularly if there were wicked provocators
Malevolent and miserable incitors

They are certainly worse than Satan
O, Lord ! Do not put them near the sultan

43. The chess tournament



The Commander of the procession of the stars⁵⁷
The chief of the rising and setting stars
The sultan of the throne of the fourth cycle
At the time of rising from the east
Opened up the game of chess on the green carpet
Between the moon and the soldiers of star
Using the light pawn to checkmate the king
Its beams striking like concealed arrows
the prince's heart was filled with fury
The lion had been wounded by zealotry
He did not sleep the whole night long
He would not lie still, like the flowing river
At the daybreak, as the light appeared
Separating the horizon from the darkness
The prince rose and came to the council
Near the palace of the delicate⁵⁸
He sat down and spoke thus with the attendants
Round up the companions and the friends
But for me, you should call only Mem
Tajdin and brothers do not call
Today I will show Mem my anger
He has offended, I shall teach him manners
You should heed this carefully
You should carry out orders immediately
Then he sent out an attendant to call Mem
The rose-water and rose candy were ready
So much wine, sherbet and sugar
So much ambergris, musk and rose-water

57- *The Commander of the procession of the stars the Sun.*
58- *The delicate : Zin.*

Were brought in and taken around the council
The audience becoming merry and joyful

Resulting in talk and conversation
Fetching chess and backgammon

The prince told Mem, with malice and anger
Today, we have a battle and a war with you

Stand up presently and come and seat yourself opposite
Against you I am the combatant certainly

Our bet with you, o proud one !
Is that the winner can have his heart's desire

But the prince had a son
At a lovely age, full of fun

He shamed Joseph with his beauty
he surpassed Rustam with his bravery

He was a friend and a companion of Mem
In « weal and woe » he was with Mem

This leader of the boys, named Girgin
Immediately sent a word to Tajdin

When that hero stood up in response
Cheko and Arif too stood up

The lions broke off every chain and fetter
The three went to the prince together

As Tajdin came along with the brothers
The dice for Mem was « double six »

As the Bishop, the Rook and the Knight⁵⁹ arrived
Prince Din and his teacher were mated

They knew that Mem was playing artfully
The prince told Mem : « Two more games »

Mem beat the prince in three games soundly
The mischief-maker⁶⁰ then looked out cunningly

59- *The Bishop, the Rook and the Knight : the three brothers.*

He noticed Zin appearing at the window
The sun was looking at the moon

See what trick the malevolent
This kind of pretext he invented :

Saying : « Alternate are the games, playing and seating
You two now exchange places

This time, Mem shall be defeated
And what you desire shall be achieved

The prince rose and took the place of poor Mem
Mem took the place opposite the beloved

As the eyes of Mem sighted Zin
He lost for nothing the bishop and the queen

His mind was fixed on the window
He was giving away his knight for a pawn

The prince beat Mem decisively in six games
Mem had become drunk with the wine opposite

The prince told Mem « We have won « the of the heart »
He replied « Say it, what is your demand ? »

The prince said : « our aim is not « money making »
What is required of you is « truth revealing »

The purpose of playing , the game and tournament
Was nothing other than the uncovering of a secret

My condition is this « That you make a confession
Who in this world is your obsession ?

Any fairy attracting your heart
Of houri quality, an exemplary angel

Should I find her worthy
I shall give my money for you to marry

The malevolent at the opportune time
Stabbed with a kind of absolving charge

Saying « I have seen the one Mem loves
She is an Arab girl, lip-spotted
From head to foot is black as tar
For the prince to mention and propose in not on par
Mem was so much hurt by that stabbing
That he lost his sense absolutely
the sea of the loving heart heaved
suddenly it boiled and thundered
He said « She is never as said
My prince ! the fairy that has captured my heart
Is a princess, residing in the court
A fabulous bird, high nested
She is princely, a pedigree offspring
Divine, not of water and soil mixing
The head of the houris and a delicate dame
Although an angle, Zin is her name
The prince considered this information as offensive
As he heard it he became quite angry
He told the group of the servants
Why don't you, ungracefuls !
Seize this nobody and humble
So that to kill him as an example
Two hundred lions jumped at Mem
Mem stood on his feet holding he dagger
Tajdin and Cheko joined with the brother
Standing up in unity and fervour
Saying « O soldiers ! halt
You are not drunk or intoxicated
You know too well who we are
Possessors of the art and champions we are

If five hundreds of you were to charge, raging
We shall not afford you the chance of striking

If your death be not in our hands
Nevertheless you shall see a lot from these hands

By the time you have Mem troubled
Three hundreds of you would be wounded

Unless you cut the Three of us down
How could you touch Mem, even ?

However anything our ruler has ordered
Without hindrance, shall be obeyed

Our hands are tied before the prince
Here are our necks, hands, feet and the chains »

The prince rose and tied Mem's hands and feet
Tajdin, at that moment wished to be dead

Yet what could he do ? It did not shame him
for the executioner was not a man but a prince

The prince seized Mem and sent for the commander
Saying « Jail him in the narrow dungeon »

They carried him and put him near a thief
He was imprisoned in the dark dungeon

People in the Diwan and council dispersed
They were all distressed for Mem

The council was moaning and groaning
They were all wailing for Mem.

44. Mem in the prison

The orbit's⁶¹ love is never nil
The orbit's hate is eternally still

Anything that it picks from the earth
Will certainly be returned to the earth

The glory it openly seeks for itself
The abyss it secretly demands for ourselves

You do not see, every day that the sun
Which shines over the cave of the earth

particularly with the tribe of lovers
Every traitor and a crook, as well as a hypocrite

Conquering our lovers' hearts most definitely
First with coquetry then with prudery

Making one at the end weary and despondent
Like Mem, humbled and imprisoned

Thrown suddenly in jail hopelessly
And put in a terminal bed⁶²

That unfortunate who is tittles Mem
With no friend, news or chum

Thrown into a screaming pit
As narrow and dark as a grave

Hateful as the giant's mouth
Fearful as Nekir and Munkir⁶³

Sitting there like a worshipper
The prison seeming a forty-day repentance cell

That place for him became a Nakhshab river
That full moon turned into a one-night crescent

61- *The orbit destiny.*

62- *A terminal bed earth.*

63- *Nekir and Munkir : the two interrogating angels.*

When the Sifi⁶⁴ reached the secluded cell
The devotion reached the solitude level

Sometimes he had a fit of passion like a lover
Sometimes he had fits of hope like a worshipper

Every moment deeply crying
And talking to Zin saying

That : « O, you, who radiates instinctive warmth !
Today, as in Egypt, you are dear like Aziz⁶⁵

Daily, a hundred times in my sad heart
In this pit you fortify my endurance

Yet, now and then, is it possible as Zulaikha
To ask of me ? You, O sugar-lipped one ?

Layla you are, to you I am Majnun
Rose-coloured with full-blooded tears

Farhad I am, and to me you are Shirin
A torrent of tears flows from the sweet origin

If the world has become a prison
Then today I alone am a Muslim

Because from the mouth of the messenger prophet
This new is true and inspired

That the world is the heaven of the infidel
And the affliction home of the faithful

And tough I am confused profoundly
I am deeply happy in this confusion

If you were to keep me a hundred years in prison
Would I ever despair of the union ?

I swear by the Text of the Light⁶⁶
The face that is the written book

64- *The Sifi devout Mem.*

65- *Aziz ancient king of Egypt.*

66- *The Text of the Light : the Koran.*

I swear the times by the truth of the figure and stature
And forty times by the truth of the ear-lock and the mole

I swear by the sun of the face, rightly
And by the visible crescent, truthfully

By the prayer-niche of the brows assuredly
By the kneeling-place, the magnificent plaits

I swear hundred times by the two eyes
My pledge with them is this

To the last spark of my soul
Beloved ! You are lodged in the soul

As much as I am restless with separation
That much more I am hopeful of our union

Although the prince was angry with me
He has not left me to grieve without reason

Although to Bekir's word he paid attention
He only carried out an act of predetermination

Because you are a king, I am a beggar
I was neither your equal nor your match

You have the sun's beauty and the moon's forehead
So delicate and so full of grace

I am cast down, humiliated and degraded
So weak and with a heart wounded

I am a moth, and have given my body to fire
I am burnt out visibly and invisibly

My heart is a water-lily, you are the sun
My body is like the hemp, you are the moonlight

If the body decomposes or burns out
And if the heart sinks in a sea of sorrow

I deserve it, as it is just, not unjust
This is peculiar to the fire of love

Though this pit id deep excessively
It is not far from justice actually

I am a Sufi residing in my hermitage
Seeking the light of the face of Zin

In short, people of the « Die » station
In accordance with the dictum : « before you die »

The commendation of the self has been completed
The refining of the heart has been attained

The picture of the soul has been clarified
The self, the heart and the spirit together purified

Though the secluded one in his prison cell
Has may not yet completed the year's cycle

Or perhaps of the days he has not completed forty
Yet any doubts in his heart are replaced by certainty

The light in his heart is evident
The secrets before him are uncovered

So the mirror of the heart is now polished
The picture with the meaning is altered

That structure of the metaphoric desire
Has outgrown the playground of the youthful lover

This possible state with any other
Has become just a part of the total aspect

These trees, stones, beasts and humans
These minerals, plants and animals

Anything he looked at carefully favourably
Anything he imagined unfavourably

In each and everything he saw Zin
In each and everything he was certain and keen

As if he were residing in the observatory
And the pit for him was the binocular

45. Zin loses hope and blames the orbit

Zin who was saddened by the separation
Was impatient, nervous, listless and exhausted

Before Mem's jail affliction
She had not despaired of their union

When Mem reached the pit
She had no more hope for connection

The picnic, the palace and the courtyard
Were for her now the siege, the prison and the dungeon

As for the sherbets and the foods
You might say they were all prohibited

The soul was sleepless and restless
The body was listless and powerless

She became so miserable and frail
As if her body were a single hair

That hair had turned as yellow as the saffron
Changing into the colour of Khani's face

Night to dawn and dawn to night
She never ceased remembering the Lord !

Every morning saying to the turning wheel⁶⁷
« O, untrustful and blood-thirsty oppressor

Against you I have no grudge or complaint
Then why do you show me such a hatred ?

You never gave me a chance
And you marked only one Mem for malice

At our door you lit a fire
With it you burnt Mem's heart

You kindled a light in Mem's face
That inflamed and burnt my heart

67- *The turning wheel : the day.*

What interest do you have in me, I wonder
You displayed to me a wholesome soldier

First, why did you let me see him ?
Why then did you hide him from me ?

You burnt with the fire of separation
You killed with the longing affliction

All the world is happy and enjoying
Yet to me and Mem you gave mourning

Tell me about your own plight
Pour the poison out of your heart

You sent Joseph away to the well
Leaving me in this damned house

As Jacob I am always sad and suffering
The patience of my heart and my soul you are plundering

Only as Zulaikha I am staying
Without Joseph, desire or sheltering

Sometimes complaining to the poor Mem
Saying : « O sinless and troubled Joseph ! »

So as not to think I am comfortable
Do not suspect that I am able

By God, I swear by the Lord
In the sunny days and in the dark nights

I am neither touching food nor sleeping
Only the two eyes are always weeping

And while the eyes remain wakeful
The heart feeds but on blood

O, prayer-niche of my heart ! by the desire of the heart
O, the Kaaba of my soul ! by the Kaaba of the God

Every moment of suffering at the hand of your separation
Every time of aching at the hand of your alienation

A hundred « Ah »s and two hundred moans and wails
Go out from the heart and soul at all times

This is how it is with me, day and night
How are you faring, O, dear heart ?

My prisoner ! Who is your companion ?
My beloved ! Who is your friend ?

O, heart ! Do leave my heart
O, soul ! You too suffer the same fate

Go both to see Mem
And bring back one news item

O, heart ! After making the passage
Soon bring back the message

To know the condition of the troubled
And what occupies the mind of the perturbed

Is he reconciled with me, or is he offended ?
Is it spring or autumn in his orchard ?

Nice, and nicely coloured as the red rose,
Or miserable and weary as the nightingale ?

The court has become the home of tribulation
The prison has become the Garden of Eden

I wish the prince were angry with me
and fettered and chained me like Mem

And sent me to that pit, there
Opening it one day a year

So I could once see that troubled one
and could treat that wounded one

If in my life were only one last spark
Death would then be really right

46. Tajdin and his brothers discuss how to free Mem

The parts of the book of love

The binder of the metaphoric volume

The head-band, part, quire and combination
So they arranged in system and regulation

Saying Mem and Zin were gracefully educated
Then their suffering started

And that suffering became a sea of fire
And that fire of sorrow became rebellious

People who had an inkling of love
Were affected so much by that fire

Those who had become sick with suffering
Come out to the open grumbling

Particularly those old associates who had been
Their friends, namely Siti and Tajdin

Their suffering raised its head, restarted
So much it could no longer be tolerated

Although they were now separated
Again they were with suffering afflicted

Zin's image was haunting Siti
Mem's grief was driving Tajdin to insanity

Fighting every moment with his brothers
On his mind were these matters

Either to stand up and go before the Prince, angrily
Demanding the release of offending Mem immediately

Or going at once and beg for Mem
To forgive Mem's offence and sin

In order that the prince may release the brother
Or else this life and property be sacrificed together

so spoke Arif : « Mighty Rustam »
This task is impossible without a fight

Without a struggle, a charge and a war
Do not try to tackle this affair

This battle cannot be waged with counselling
Here we are now, and at the battle field to-morrow

Or it would be best to ride to-morrow
We three well armed and prepared

Wearing the shields and the armours
Adding the wrist sets and the helmets

Brandishing the maces, playing with spears
And in this manner demand from the prince to release Mem

Either we free our Mem forcibly
Or we lose our heads courageously

Should he release Mem in this way
We cure the suffering in his heart right away

But if he insists on his disdain
We shall wage a holy campaign

First we shall cut down Bekir to pieces
To remove that intriguer from the way

Then if there were a wolf on every door-step
We shall handle the enemy one by one

If the prince were to remain adamant
And rise to overwhelm us

The mill of death shall turn earnestly
Crushing the heads, not grinding grains

All Botan shall be dancing and singing
Sweet maidens will come to watch

Observing the blows lovingly
As we start the battle candidly

Every moment these fairy-like damsels
Shall say well done, O Mem and nobles

Some will cry, others praise
Some will laugh, others pray

Lovers shall look from their towers
As the pearls peaking out of shells

Princes shall watch from their windows
And tear off their rose-coloured shirts

One shall hear from those delicate ones
A hundred praises and a thousand « bravo »

Tadin listened to the advice of his brother
And agreed with it wholeheartedly

47. Tajdin sends a word to the prince demanding the release of Mem

At daybreak, dawn came riding the chief charger
Replacing the grey horse with the white ones⁶⁸

Concealing the dark horse in the stable
Saddling up the white one

Getting out its fiercy mace
Armed with its golden sword

Making the world yellow with apprehension
Cutting the curves and belts of all mountains

Tajdin with his brothers as wall as allies
Choosing legitimately and voluntarily

Accompanied with dancing and playing
Riding Arab thoroughbreds and bare mares

Armed with maces, surprisingly
Charged and awakened the enemy

Raising the dense dust in the field
As if digging the enemy's graves

Tajdin selected an old follower
And despatched him quickly to the prince

Saying « Go and tell the prince and the chieftains
The wise do not extinguish their torches

Though our prince is known for his foresight
Today there is no light in his eyesight

We were four trusted brothers
All four in his service as lovers

Is it fair that for more than a year,
Mem has remained in the pit without care ?

68- *The chief charger : the sun ; the grey horse the night ; the white ones : the day.*

So the enemy is happy and the friends are sad
Cheko and Tajdin to die they are obliged

Though Mem is a sinner
He is a lover and love is a king

One does not sentence a king
And one should not oppress the innocent

We beg you to release Mem
And cure the suffering of his heart

We are four brothers as strong as a wall
Pillars for his happiness, we are all

Should he desire, let our for heads
Be as balls for his cudgels

Either to fix the matter for us
Or send Bekir to us

so we could tell him a few words
and pour our to him our suffering

With the public we have lost face
Therefore we should emigrate to Damascus

48. Bekir is afraid and draws another plot

The messenger presented a full report
He returned aware of the reaper's retort

Knew that for himself this boded no good
And he said : « Amnesty for Mem is only right

My prince ! Did we not advise you previously
Do not antagonise Tajdin and his brothers entirely
either give them Zin or kill me alternatively
Otherwise they will turn into arch enemies rightly

The best thing is not to say anything at all
Tajdin does not suspect you

Say that we have ransomed Mem and Zin
That we have married them off and given them to Tajdin

Do not show any obstinacy
Put out the fire of sedition

Then postpone the matter to a suitable opportunity
Beware ! Do not give him a chance or show him magnanimity

If you could not defy an opponent
Then the only remedy is the use of poisonous sherbet

That is why rulers require two cups
One is for the bad and one is for the good

One cures the sickly
The other sickens the healthy

One is to separate the soul from the enemy
The other is to resurrect the dead

Do not show your anger
The right thing is to maneuver

There are jobs which cannot be done with indignation
Because they cannot be performed with force and coercion

They require mastery and contemplation
Surprise, endurance and discretion

The time itself changes colour periodically
The Lord himself provided that as an example

Namely night and day, morning and evening
Some matters are light and some are dark

We too have nights and days
In order to act secretly or openly

We do some acts openly and some secretly
Promoting some and destroying others

That atheist⁶⁹ so much hardened the sword
With a lying tongue like a razor's edge

Right and wrong, consistency and contradiction
He was like a hoop, a sheath, a bag and a scabbaro

He fabricated so many slanders
Fastened on the sword as ornaments

He put that sword under the pillow
So hidden that no body knew

The prince whose rage was smouldering
And believing what Bekir was fabricating

Thus answered the brave messenger :
« Old man ! Do not think as an evil-doer

Even if I were to forget my duties completely
Would I lose Tajdin so cheaply

My power and authority stem from him
This fame and realm too are derived from him

Vain is this title, position and high rank
God forbid, I enjoy them without his blessing

He is a Rustam, a champion
I maybe a treasure, he is a bastion

69- *That atheist : Bekir.*

Tell him concerning Mem and Zin
I have given them legally to Tajdin

You were wild with me, unjustifiably
Did you ask for anything that was not granted fully ?

Tajdin and Cheko are respectable and honourable
What they want, is quite acceptable

The messenger quickly left the audience of the prince
He returned and fully presented his report

The lions⁷⁰ on the war path were reconciled
Saying « May his rule and state be perpetuated

49. Bekir shows the Prince a way out

In the evening, as the sky set up the braziers
Concealing from them the torch⁷¹

Extinguishing the yellow lantern
Wearing a new colourful garment

The prince who was usually happy and merry
Had sunk into gloom and worry

That cursed, shame-faced hypocrite⁷²
Noticing the sadness of the Prince

Said : « Do not worry, O torch of the state
Should life give us a chance

And you don't relish this anger and pain
Throw Mem and Zin out of your brain

They are the source of corruption
They are the pretext for sedition

If the prince would just give me permission
I would kill Mem with some machination

You could also subdue with poisonous sherbet
Tajdin and brothers for a while

This task is easy to carry out
If people and acquaintances are kept out

My prince ! Go and tell Zin
Mem with the fire of love is burning

Mem is thirsty, you are the water of life
Mem is dying, you are the eternal spirit

Tell her that : « Go and deliver Mem
I have given him to you, marry him

71- *The braziers the stars ; the torch the sun.*

72- *That cursed, shame-faced hypocrite Bekir.*

I know Mem's condition is dire
He is a moth, his aim is fire

If he looks at Zin momentarily
He would cease to live certainly

Once he sees her actually
Do not expect him to stay alive

If Mem were thus to perish
The confusion and strife would vanish

There are princes who are wise and strong
Yet they may be naive and undiscerning

This naiveté derives from idiocy and inadequacy
It does not give due weight to the source reliability

Their hearts are their ears, the ears are not receptive to the heart
Their eye sights are black, their pupils are white

Anything the malicious say
They believe, though at bay

They don't say : this is good of this is bad
They don't say : this is right or this is wrong

Short-sighted, with no reflection
Quick tempered, with no toleration

Most of them have conceited minds
The majority are allergic to advice

The malevolent, the miser and the unscrupulous
The bad ancestral, the stupid and the wicked

They befriend, promote or harbour
And make many an infamous minister and commander

They handover power to such people
it would cause defects to appear in the State

The prince who is intelligent as well as a statesmen
Who is charitable and possesses a policy

Does not bring up a person
Unless that person is tested

And testing one forty times tested it thoroughly
Before selecting one for promotion

This prince and the worldly ministry
The chief and the temporary stewardship

Both are players in the same way
Both are unreal and undistinguished

Not until you become the Right and proper
How could you become an absolute minister

50. The Prince permits Zin to see Mem : Zin muses sadly

The old wise and able manager
Thus talked as if recounting a tale

Saying : The prince after advice and deliberation
Went to the Harem pavilion

He called Zin and seated her next to him
Ignoring formality he spoke frankly to her

And said Mem's travail I have ended
His ill-treatment I have banned

Though I subjected him to oppression and injustice
That oppression you inflicted and he did the injustice

Your love took away his mind
Leaving him love-giddy, insane and afflicted

We knew the cure from a physician
That the insane can be cured by the chain

That is why angrily I put him in the pit
The imprisonment has lasted a year

So that love might attain perfection
And your love would not vanish with the union

Now that I am convinced with my heart and soul
I know the degree of your emotion

That you have both attained the rank of perfection
Acceptable and worthy of being united

Indeed Mem is a true lover
We believe in him wholeheartedly

He is commanded by the order of the king
He is sanctioned by the excuse of the innocence

Anyone who dares to reproach him
Shall surely be met with punishment

Yet it is your beauty that has troubled him
It is your love that has wounded him

The arrow that has hit his heart you struck
The drug that made him unconscious you dispensed

That shadow under his eyes you drew
Not until he saw you did his heart ach **XXXX**

With ear-locks you tied his hands and feet
And as a scorpion they stung his heart

You put the collar around his neck
You set the trap for his heart and soul

How you unleashed the two gazelles⁷³
And enchanted the pauper with their beauty

So go and talk to him again
Untie the chains and release him for yourself

O, unopened bud of the red rose !
Break the cage, free the nightingale

Thirsty he is, you are the Euphrates spring
Ill he is, you are the source of living

He is dry, you are the water of life
He is dead, you are the immortal soul

The loving heart that was full of passion
Hid correctly behind the veil of reservation

But as the brother raised that veil
The blood gushed from her mouth and nose

Zin with two hundred wounds in her heart
Was in a critical condition, yet happy with death

The waves of the see of passion
Are calmed by the veil of grace

As the barrier to passion was removed
The strait of shyness between the two seas vanished

73- *The two gazelles : the eyes.*

The sea of sorrow boiled so violently
That the cover of the pot could not contain it

A wave of blood from the heart of that fairy
Spouted like the Euphrates and the Ceyhun rivers

She was trembling as if a thousand oaks were shaking
Her tears were freely flowing from a heart burning

The prince smiled soothingly at Zin
So the waves of weeping ceased

Then instead of the faked concern
Tears of magnanimity rose in his eyes

A wave of compassion engulfed him suddenly
And his eyes filled with tears instantly

Thus the brother cried with the sister
Staying with her until the morning

Zin was drowning in tears as a flower
The prince was crying for her as a warbler

All the close relatives gathered around the two
All running to kiss the hand of the prince and his hem, too

Saying : « O, defender of right and dispenser of justice
Why did you unjustly become a murderer

Zin was the flower of the garden of impeccability
Zin was the cypress of the orchard of purity

Pure, untainted like a pearl in a shell
It was unworthy of you to touch the shell

Nice, with a delicate body and impeccable
Sinless, yet you deprive her of life

How could you raise so much dust and shed so much blood
Innocent she is, yet you separate her body from her soul

The prince said : « We suspected vainly
Yet I have not become a killer, she has fainted only

Would I kill Zin deliberately ?
She is a beatitude XXX in the Harem of heaven

The Harem people ran to the princess
The canals flowed to the cypress

Then mourning wails swept the inns and lodges
Cries of distress reached the heavens

Suddenly, someone from outside came
Saying : « Mem died, he gave you his life »

Zin heard the news of Mem's death
Although on the brink of death she revived

She stoop up and looked at the four corners
She saw the prince was tearful as the rain

And the people in the Harem, publicly and privately
Were in mourning completely

She said to him : « O, source of my happiness !
Do not be unhappy at my wedding feast

O, King ! You gave freedom to the soul
Which only saw in death its release

The soul went and joined up with the soul
That spirit passed away in the spirit

Until your declaration came at last
It was in the prison of the body

As Mem, the soul was sad and in chains
To ensure satisfaction and uphold the name and honour

The reason it didn't depart until today
Was its waiting for your consent to go away

My soul ! As you heartily gave your consent
My King ! As you blessed the realm of the body

Although my exhausted body has become heavy
Yet my weakened soul has come alive

At once it left its mould
Receiving a spark from Mem's soul

Both left this perishing palace
And passed on to the lasting world

Anyone who does not accept a place
Would only end up at nowhere

Do not misinterpret this travelling
The evidence for us is still somewhere nearby

As the soul was free of the body
The souls saw that, thus the soul regained its soul

In short : After this communion
That pulsation and the torch of beauty

Tarried a while and felt easy
As together they were safe

Those drops in the sea of the attributes
Those atoms in the sea of perishings

One time they came to the shore of lose extinction
One time they reached the limits of existence

In short : from the centre of the earth
Those atoms rose to the sun

Absolutely not through union or supplantation
Definitely not through separation or transformation

Since they stayed true to the self
The atoms lodged immortally in the self

This news does not surprise me
Do not extol this as a feat for me

The Sheikh⁷⁴ to whom I am a novice, ardently
Is the free soul and I am merely the flesh

Though his name among you was Mem
He was a highly determined king

74- *The Sheikh : Mem.*

He was worthy of the king's majesty
Acceptable for divine favour

His heart is a hallowed valley
His soul is branded with the true light

He took me and lifted me to Mount Sinai
Endowing me, like himself, with insight

He took me out of this screen
Conveying this atom to the sun

When I made this journey with my soul
This soul I borrowed from the soul seller

Although he said « Go away, apparently
He meant « Come back » presently

That is why I came so that you may all be satisfied
So that to be satisfactory before the Final Judge

In order to say farewell to you
So that you might come to bid farewell at our funeral

As I leave you I am once more dancing
For I shall be satisfied in heaven most certainly

51. Zin makes her will



Mohamed Hafez ٢٠١٣

After showing such miraculous disposition
With so much high rank and high station

Zin sat down to make her will to the prince
This is how the clarified and worded the will

She said : « O, King of souls and hearts
May this maid be your sacrifice and ransom

May two hundred Zin be sacrificed for you daily
I beg not to grieve personally

The day I chose Mem for myself
It seems I chose sorrow for myself

I was a victor in the realm of sorrows
All sorrows were me as axioms

Mem is mine and yours' is the compassionate
The sorrow is mine and yours' is the sultanate

My King ! do not become my adversary
I am satisfied with my destiny

Like Chorsroe sitting on the throne
Tilt aside your golden crown

And arrange a musical entertainment
Combine taste with enjoyment

Intoxicate the simple and the youthful
Rejuvenate the old and the infirm

With the means of happiness and activity
The manners of living and serenity

Prepare the foods and the sherbets
Free the concubines and the servants

Fill the trays for scattering
So as the poor may respond to appealing

Add that which is cheering
Mix that which is perfuming

So the council may once again glitter
And congratulations may again be in order

So the sugar candies may meet
With shaking, dancing and beat

Various incenses, aloes-wood and ambergris
Rose-water, Zibad scent and yellow musk

These types to be more than the blessings
These kinds exceed the limits

Our animalism has been banished
Our spiritualism has been accomplished

If our bodies have to go to the pit
Our souls shall attain the union

A wedding that is attended by the angels
Should have many kinds of incense

Because Mem and I have angelic qualities
We are inclined to the scents and the dainties

At a marriage where angels are dancers
the bride and bride-groom deserve heaven

As on the day you gave Siti to Tajdin
The way you held parties in this city

So order the shops and the markets
To be decorated like the brides

Order the Botan to ride
Order the soldiers to put on a display

To be hot-headed as on feast days
As they play games of javelins

The day you gave away that fairy⁷⁵
The soldier you made so merry

I beg you to show the same concern
Any pay the law the same attention

75- *That fairy Siti.*

Give me twice that much today
Again be happy and generous in the same way

Donate the materials and trousseau
Prepare the singers and the musicians

To be like the fleet of Siti
Similar also to the palanquin of that fairy

A casket that is colourful and golden
A bow which is polished and glittering

Its cover should be coated
Its sunshade should be burnished

Beware ! The bride and bride-groom equally
Must be spared public indignity

So that when we enter the tomb
People may not say with sharp tongues

« What a fine day Siti's wedding
But Zin's was ever unfortunate

Let Siti come to my funeral
Let Tajdin be with Mem heartily

As Mem acted so should Tajdin
Tajdin is to replace him as bride-groom's brother

To be bridegroom's brother to my Mem
And to be happy with my sorrow

O, good and no reward seeker
O, granter of desires and aims

For one complete year
All the food that you dump

All the clothes you wear and give away
All the people, public and private, you invite

All the Clothes you tailor
All the salaries you pay

Any day you intend to fight
All you give away to charity

Whenever you sit on the throne
Whenevers you invite the soldiers

However you fill up your treasury
However you please the unhappy

However you enrich the poor
However you free the prisoners

However you talk in the government
However you release the jailed

Whatever you spend on yourself
Whatever you add to the treasury

As you repel the aggression of the enemy
And remove the oppression of the tyranny

Saving the oppressed from the oppressor
With the justice that you dedicate to God

Singing a song during the battle
Shedding the blood of the mutineers

Even food for the hunting dogs
And fodder for the pack of donkeys

Do spend them for my sake
My king ! This is my will

Do not dwell on what is real and what is metaphor
Enter all in the book of the trousseau

so that I may boast before my bridegroom
And may not be ashamed now and in ages to come

Although I have talked too much
Prattling and causing you a headache

May I be your sacrifice, my aim is far fetching
God save you, my grave is deep

Therefore I am beseeching you with such care
To be kind, compassionate and fair

Do not shame me and Mem
At the death of the wounded Mem

His funeral procession I shall accompany
And shall follow him to the cemetery

And when I die, give permission
To bury me with him

Do not keep me away from him
And let me lie in death next to him »

When Zin's will finished
Any lingering suffering vanished

The prince said : « Go and see Mem
If he is dead resurrect him

Believe me, truly and sincerely
About you and Mem, I am sorry

Whether you die or live
You and Mem shall never part ».

52. Zin visits Mem

As Zin heard this declaration
This love, loyalty and compassion

She rose and made up from head to foot
An embodiment of beauty drowned in a sea of jewels

Siti, the granny and one hundred maids
The sun, the moon and the moving planets

Together left the towers
As the pearl grains leaving the shells

One hundred maids, Siti and the granny
Carried her off with celebration and ceremony

Knowing that her desire would not be fulfilled
Without a private meeting with the perfect Sheikh

That Venus⁷⁶, like a dancing atom
Became the forbidden secret of the private seclusion

As they arrived at the secluded-house
The gate of the prison was opened

They proceeded together with torches and lanterns
The granny and Siti somehow going ahead

They saw at the share of the shell dwelling
The condemned drowning in the sea of love

That priceless pearl of the soul
Had been wasted cheaply

The lantern of the cage had no more power
The rose garden of the body had no more water

They asked the prison people
Regarding the condition of that miserable inmate

People who were with Mem in the prison
Said « We saw from the top of the wall

⁷⁶- That Venus Zin.

A strange lightning hit Mem, at the head
A flash went out of his head

One like the sun, one as the moon
One like gold, one as the silver

As the sun and the moon joined together
At once they vanished in each other

As together they were alight
Both were reflected in the light

They became so luminous and bright
That they made the prison a rose garden yard

Then we heard no more of Mem
The blood of his heart poured out »

O, the heart sight, unopened yet
Do not deny the manifestation of the soul

So you may not think this is incarnation
Or leaving or entering supplantion

So as not to suspect it as a tale
Or a trivial talk and vain

The dream you see, is the station
Some of the sight, is yet incomplete

Some of the companions of respected Mem
Informed the friends and colleagues

That guide⁷⁷ looked at them carefully
His heart affected their hearts positively

The seclusion site of the afflicted Mem
Became the curtain raiser, for friends and foes

As the granny and Siti went over to him
However much they talked to him

Saying « O, Mem ! Stand up, Zin has come
As your soul, no doubt, in truth she has come »

77- *That guide : Mem.*

That lip-thirsty for fresh pure water
Was not delighted by the beloved's nomenclature
However much they worked on the heart desire
However much they sprinkled him with rose-water
They did not notice any life in his body
Only some smoke was leaving the head
The torch had suddenly extinguished
The smoke that rose from the head reached the rood
Zin came and stood overlooking
The full moon eclipsing the halo
As the veil was removed before the beauty
The sun appearing with the crescent
Zin thus addressed him intuitively :
« Rise O body that I have breathed into ! »
The flashing word from the mouth of the beautiful
Alighted the top of the candle's smoke
That smoke caught a spark of the flash
And the spark illuminated the lantern cage
The soul paused in the deepest recess of seclusion
Then rose with the intention of pilgrimage
First he faithfully rinsed his mouth
Renewing the ablution ritual with the Zemzem water
Standing in the prayer niche and the station
Directing his forehead towards Reception
Touring once, twice, around the House
The moth coming close to the oil
During the scorching of the feather
They said a few words to each other
The moth⁷⁸ said : « You are a good guide »
The candle⁷⁹ answered « You are a good friend »

78- *The moth : Mem.*

The moth said : « You are a sign on the road »
The candle answered : « You are a gift of life »

The moth said « You are the light of the heart »
The candle answered : « You are the fire in my bosom »

The moth said : « You are the right cure »
The candle answered « You are a tender heart »

The moth said « You are the King »
The candle answered « You are the prayer niche »

The moth said « You are the houri of the self »
The candle answered « You are the light of the self »

Those lip-thirsty ones, without impropriety
Those passionate ones, without erring

Thus conversed with each other
In perfect harmony with one another

53. Mem's fate



Thanks to granny, Siti and the maids
That bonded, imprisoned and afflicted

Slowly warmed up to the conversation
And intoxicated with the smell and scents

They said to Mem « O, bleeding heart !
We have come so you may not go mad

Zin was the cause of your insanity
The prince was the cause of your misery

At last the prince shows mercy to you
Zin has come to talk to you

If you have been thirsty, here is the life water
If you have been sick, Lokman has come over

If you are a Majnun, Layla herself has come to you
If you are Wamik, here is Azra for you

If you are a nightingale, a rose is ready for you
If you be a water-lily, both are eyeing you

If you be a moth, the candle is flaring bright
If you be dead, Jesus has come to revive you

Do not go insane from this passion
Do not be a stranger, you are well known

The houri with your heart and soul in her hand
Zin, whom you have always fancied

Has come to you as you so often desired
Life is only coming, going and perishing

Do not sell this vanishing life cheaply
And do not sell the soul eagerly

Not until you drink from the cup of death
Can you dispose so readily with your soul

Again acquaint yourself with prudence
Discard the chains of this madness

Since we have removed your fetters and chains
Rise and come with us to see the prince

The soul of generosity and giver of all gifts
His is the shade cast by the tree of state

He has gathered for you friends and acquaintances
Prepared the carpets and other requisites

He is firmly in favour of your wedding
And he is helping your luck and fortune

As soon as you reach his audience chamber
He will fulfil your desire

Granting whatever you wish
Making you so proud

When Mem heard this advice
The artist in him responded in this way

« I shall not go to see any prince
Nor shall I become the slave to any prisoner

This prince and the metaphoric ministry
This magic and this imaginary game

Are wholly vain and temporary
They are aimless and perishable

A prince who may die is not a prince
Being disposable, the himself is a prisoner

I am going to the presence of the prince of princes
The ruler of the rulers and the paupers

The king of kings, of princes and kings
The forgiver of all charges and sins

Who has created the mirror of beauty
Showing in the ear-lock and mole his glory

The lantern polishing the body
Therein revealing for us

That he is the wise prince, possessor of splendour
Who can't be deposed, does not vanish or alter

He has married us off in the invisible world
He has supported us with the undoubted word

We are the first fruit of the orchard of glory and grace
We can say thankfully that we are virgins and proud

God forbid that in this perishing mansion
Outside the immortal Garden of Eden

We commit adultery like animals
So foolish in this temporary world

And as adulterers go before the Almighty
Cowardly, shamed and rejected

With houris and boys the Lord
Has ornamented Rizwan's orchard⁸⁰

They are waiting for our compassion
They are proud with our invitation

But the heaven of lovers is a separate place
The date of the meeting is set by the Almighty

It is much higher than Rizwan's Garden
There is no place in it for houris and boys

This is the fate we await from the Almighty
He is our succour and our hope »

As he voiced his final wish,
The door opened for him readily

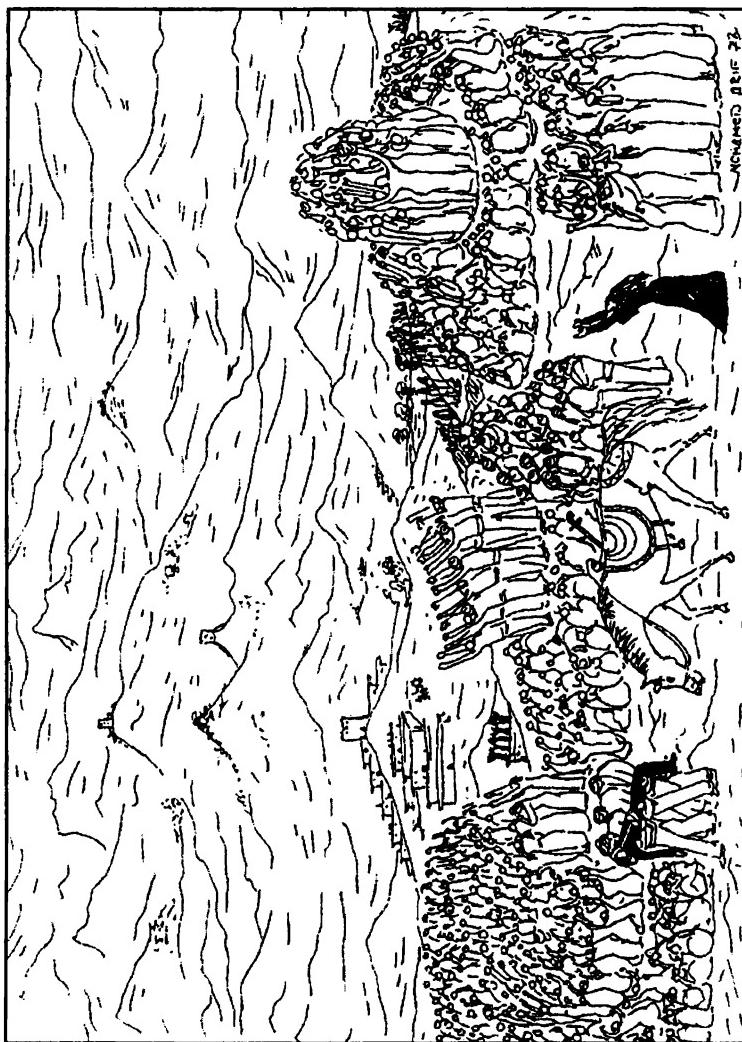
the bird which had been locked in the cage
Thus left it as if it had never been there

He stepped out of his earthern fetter
His heart ceased to flutter

The falcon, unchained from the earth's centre
Flew and reached the throne of the Possessor

80- *Rizwan's orchard : Heaven.*

54. Mem is mourned and Bekir is killed



A mourner who knew the facts
Told the story like this

« As the soul separated from the prison of the body
Wailing and crying rose out in the city

Screaming, lamenting and weeping
Noise-making and distress-calling

The people of Botan, old and children
Women and girls, bride and maiden

Personalities, great and high ranking
Clerks, boys and uncaring

Not one individual was happy in the city
Everyone was confused and dizzy.

All hurried to Mem's wake
Adding sadness to suffering

Tajdin and Bekir by accident
Met together in some point

Tajdin said : « O cause of the world corruption
You devilish creature in the shape of man

O, source of intrigue and sedition
O, defeater of desire and ambition

O, separator of Mem and Zin
O, torturer of the wounded body

Wicked, evil and remorseful jay
What more ? You have made it like the Last Day

You talked falsely of Mem
Until you destroyed him

What hypocrite you are and what an enemy
And still you show up with your infamy

Should Mem die and you survive ?
Should you live on happily in this world ?

He threw Bekir on the ground
And separated his calamitous body from the soul

But as he went to see his brother
He saw no spark of life in that source of light

Then Tajdin threw his diadem and the head-roll
Over the body of the poor Mem

He was grief-stricken and enraged
And anyone whom that giant engaged

he at once sought to decimate
And bury, in line with Bekir's fate

No one dared to oppose him absolutely
Since this would have made him a killer undoubtedly

Unavoidably they informed the prince of this matter
And the prince came and tied him up in chains

As they carried the casket
Taking the martyr from the battle field

They saw a clear sign
As if it were the Judgement Day

The demon⁸¹ they had tied so cleverly
Did not fear the chain and the shackle

He proceeded to break the chain and halter
And remove the gate and screen

And as the giant left the cavern
He ran and embraced the coffin

He carried over his heat the coffin
His wailing reached the heaven

The city inhabitants entirely
Appeared in mourning garments totally

All the famous people in the city
Including women, veiled in dignity

81- *The demon powerful Tajdin.*

Loosening the hair in their plaits
Dressing from head to foot in black

Even discarding head-kerchiefs and face veils openly
And mourning Mem, freely

The lamenters, the old woman and the granny were groaning
All were as a night bird moarning

They sang dirges harmoniously
Zin walked in the procession elegantly

As if Venus were listening to the sound of a musical
Like a dancer she preceded the funeral

Humans and ants, domestic and wild animals
Trees and stones, birds and minerals

All these were mourning
Everybody was tunefully lamenting

The dark sight of that black mass
Looked like a dense cloud

From many of the rose coloured faces
Poured down tears full of blood

As if it were a new spring season
And over the garden flowers the rain was pouring down

This mourning and these black mourning clothes
This dress with the veil, this wrapper and the black veil

Ever since have been made a custom by the Botan people
And remain a tradition until the Day of Judgement

55. Zin speaks well of Bekir



When they went to the cemetery
They saw a dead body between two poles
It had been thrown on the ground like litter
With no mourner, caretaker or lamentor
They asked : « Who is this one neglected so miserably ? »
They said : « It is Bekir, punished deservedly
Whom Tajdin had banished from the face of the Earth
And pleased the world by vanishing
The narrator told this tale
As Zin heard the story
She addressed the prince and Tajdin this manner
O, King and minister of glory and power
I beg you to discard obstinacy
Concerning this source of corruption
Because the possessor of both mankind and the jinn
That creator of earth and heaven
The day he gave love to the lovers
He gave hate to the censors
When he created us from nothing
He made us all needing and being needed
We are the red roses, for us thorns were created
We are the treasures, for us snakes were created
Roses are protected by thorns
Treasures are guarded by snakes
Though at the beginning he alienated us
At the end he was loyal to us
Although he openly opposed us
Yet he secretly agreed with us
If he had not become for us a barrier
Our love would have been vain and perishable

Though he harmed himself terribly
Regarding us he acted correctly

He was the reason we found our truth
Inwardly he returned to our way

He too is the martyr for the cause
And he too is happy with no remorse

Beware ! of this assembly in which we are
And of the cemetery we are standing in

When we go to the lofty fold
He shall be our dog at the threshold

Would it be fair if the possessor of charity
Who is a lens perceiving everything with utter clarity

Who is a perfect mirror like the water
Would thus not accept a rancour ?

God forbid that he should lack compassion for rancour
For never having experienced a burning passion

This much is said of the alienated person
This way one fulfils one's obligation

Such people are merciful by nature
They too are deserving of heaven's blessing

56. Zin dies too

In short the martyr executed for loving
The victim of oppression unjustly killed

Who was murdered for a sinless crime
As if by order of the king

Was eulogised as the light of purity
And was interred in the earthly cemetery

That pearl⁸² was buried like a treasure
And that snake⁸³ was buried below his feet

At his head they put a sign
That this is the leader on the day of Resurrection
the Chief Knight of the tribe of true players
The commander of all proud spirits

As Zin approached, slender as a pine
She resembled a cypress, bending low

Without veil, moaning like a flute
Her tears pouring unceasingly

You would say it were the April season
A sea pouring from the clouds incessantly

As the rain was falling on the soil
Each drop turning into ten pearls

Every time moaning « Ah » from the depth of suffering
The mourners, may God preserve them

Were lamenting in harmony with her
All the nine planets echoed with one voice

Princes, officers and soldiers
Citizens, dervishes and paupers

82- *That pearl* Mem.

83- *That snake* : Zin.

The graceful, the pretty and the lovers
The houris, the fairies and the entertainers

All were mourning in unison
The wailing reached to the peaks of Atlas

Zin had no more strength for standing
She fell, exhausted, and ceased moaning

She sat down at the head of poor Mem
And imagined that Mem was aware of talking

She said : « O, my body and soul owner
I am the garden and you are the gardener

The garden that you tilled has an owner no more
Without your presence of what use is it anymore ?

This mole, this temple, this face
This garden of beauty and grace

The black almond, and the light brown eye
The pomegranate, the quince, the apple and the lofty shoot

Finely coloured, delicious and tasteful
Forbidden to other than you, of that you can be sure

Shaking my palm body and quiver
And rocking this vine tree altogether

These bright ears, these enticing tulips
These eyes like basil and refreshing violets

This temple, this ear-lock, this mole
The best thing is to plunder them all

Cutting the grown like the flowers
And over my head heaping the dust and sand

Pulling out all the ear-locks, hair by hair
It is my right to ache, spot by spot

This garden, spring, vines and fruits
Lights, buds an all the flowers

Were made for your eyes entirely
And blessed by your eyes only

I shall pluck them completely
So that no one may share them absolutely

But perhaps I am imagining
That you maybe changing

Perhaps to you this grief is not acceptable
Perhaps you might hold me responsible

This existence is a combination of the soul and the body
They are yours, not to be disposed of lightly

If that grace were wanting even one hair
Perhaps you might become enraged

Were you ever to reproach me
I know I could not muster a reply

Soon, like you, I shall be overwhelmed
It is time, as your twin, I rejoined

It is time to unroll the rug⁸⁴
To cleanse myself from mixing

The right thing is that endowed with this beauty
I must not damage either ear-lock or mole, absolutely

The true trust, I must surrender
And submit to you with decorum, and splendour »

She dealt in this way with the facts
Frightening the relatives out o their wits

She looked at her twin soul in the grave
The body separating from the soul

Giving up the soul eagerly
As if it were a candle extinguishing suddenly

She surrendered her soul to the Lord
And her body was lowered into the grave

84- *To unroll the rug to pray.*

Those heart-wounded mourners
Sent out new distressing cries

Weils from the souls of those present
Joined the high calls of the onlookers

For three days and three nights from the ground below
Rose continuously to the Throne on High

Until Zin was prepared ceremoniously and traditionally
As had been always the custom

The grave containing angelic Mem
Like a shell holding a pearl

So much they cried over and wailed
The tears poured like the rain

Loading it so much with pearls
Once more the casket was opened

Both pearls were placed in one mother of the shell
The sun and the moon in one constellation

Without intermediaries they put them together
Entrusting them, without separation, to each other

In short : « The casket the re-opened
The prince saying : « Mem ! Here is your beloved

Three times an echo from the mould did come
The tune was in the form of welcome

All heard that sound clearly
So all believed in love sincerely

Good for them and well done, one would say
They were not meant for this world anyway

They were not spoilt by their rank and property
Such was the pure effect of love

They left them pure and clean
They went proud and virgin

Lip-thirsty and hungry for each other's fruit
With unfulfilled desires going before the Lord

They lived well, enjoying love, by God
They died well, blessed by God

Anyone as beautiful as Zin
Exchanging her life for love

Or like Mem sacrificing everything for love
And forgetting life and enjoyment

Shall attain all their desires
And shall achieve all their wishes

O, Lord ! by the word of true love
O, Lord ! by the perfection of true lover

O, Lord ! by the sweetness of beauty
O, Lord ! by the love of glory

O, my Lord ! by the pain of the beloved's separation
O, my Lord ! by the taste of the desired union

O, Lord ! by the sweetness of the beloved
O, Lord ! by the enmity of the wicked

O, my Lord ! by the delicacy of the beautiful
O, Lord ! by the hopes of the sorrowful

O, my Lord ! by the tears in the nightingale's eye
O, Lord ! by the dew within the red rose

O, my Lord ! by the love of the majnun
O, Lord ! by the rose coloured face of Layla

O, Lord ! by Mem and that love
O, Lord ! by the bereavement of Zin

When you separate Khani from the living
Do not deprive him of loving

that is of the rule of Muhammed
O, Lord ! Do not deprive Ahmed⁸⁵

85- Ahmed : Khani.

However much he says about the prophethood
What he seeks of the rule is absolution

He always discourses on the rule
But it is such a struggle and agony

His words may appear irresponsible
And his work maybe disputable

His words may seem eloquent, visibly
His action maybe wicked, invisibly

Like Mem, sacrificing his life
Like Bekir, forgiving the good

57. Each grass has its own odour

The wisdom is that on leaving this world
They went to look at the palace of the End

They did so without abandoning their nature
For Everyone was created in one's own image

Thus it was that over Mem's and Zin's grave
Grew with the cultivation of love of the two

Two rebellious shoots proceeded to bloom
And rise with the drunken passion

One of lofty cypress and one of slender pine
Green, pretty and highly shading

And at least put their arms around each other
Standing as a stature side by side together

But the one who had been devoid of honour
Blew into a twisted and bitter juniper

That tree never experiencing a moment's peace
As one who is covered completely by thorns

It rose and managed to reach the other two trees
Becoming and obstacle to the union of the two lovers

It was devoid of tranquillity
And showed its hostility

Once again reaching these two lovers
Once again spying on them censoriously

In short : In the branches and roots
It managed to entwine itself around like a weed

People who are originally bad-natured
Can their nature ever be re-structured ?

If you grow colocynth for forty years
Water it a hundred times with honey

Nourish it with sunshine
Sprinkle it always with rose-water

Dissect its roots every day
Feed the plant with sugar

Repeat this service many times over
Will it ever turn into a water-melon ?

Therefore do not be surprised when it finally bears
Nothing other than bitter fruit, it rears

58. The end of the story

Those acquainted with the cycle of the day
Told me the end of the story this way :

Saying: An old man who was also a compassionate lover to the lover
Whose word resembled the true dawn colour

As he wend through life observing
His soul was gaining victory over his body

Before him the secrets were revealed
He stayed close to the Throne of the Lord

As he departed from the earthen world
Scoring victory in the world of the heart

And while faring over the Table of Heaven
He was blessed with new discoveries every day

He appeared to be showing miraculous signs
He used to warn owners of the station

That old man, following a dream or an inspiration
this way announced the truth's revelation

Saying « I went to the garden of the heavens
Where I saw two thousand boys and maidens

All were working in a palace
The palace was made of precious pearls

One was like Bekir with a crown and an armour
Standing in front of an appointed door

Holding a bamboo cudgel
He was beyond recognising

I told him « O, rank possessor
Are you the owner or the doorkeeper ?

He said Sheikh ! Do you not recognise me ?
I am Bekir, the doorkeeper

I am Mem and Zin's partner
So here I am, sitting on the threshold

This palace consists of eight visible storeys
One is mine, seven are theirs

I, rod in hand, keep security
And also hold a share in the property

Though I appear as a keeper
But regarding the place I am a partner

I told him : « O, malicious perpetrator
Clarify the position so I may understand

Although the generosity of the Generous is boundless
Still why did the Lord give you this place ?

He said : « Sheikh ! You still have much to learn
Though in the world you were well acquainted

Although I was with my words their censor
I always looked at them as their lover

Thus I pulled them from the world's corruption
By making them familiar with pain and affliction

Although in the world I deprived them of joyful living
Guided them through the hell of suffering

I endowed them with so much policy
That they could have the presidency

Thus I advised against their interests
Until in this way I too lost my head

These two worlds are like fellow-wives
And the fellow-wives stab each other with knives

Not until you divorce one
Shall you be able to see charm in one

That dualism we had them abandon
When we pulled them up from earth to heaven

I have given them an entire garden
They have given me a straw in the garden

The Sheikh listened carefully to his words
And said : O, culprit with the good end

How did Tajdin kill you without committing a crime ?
How did the Lord take care of your predicament ?

He said : « The Lord forgave him, I could tell
So he went to heaven, not to hell

The creator has forgiven the evil and wickedness
And he has thus inscribed the heaven

With my evilness and depravity
The world had become angry

I was killed for the sake of the system of the World
For the comfort of the people of the World

Perhaps his action seemed an abomination, visibly
But that abomination was a blessing, invisibly

There are deeds which are wrong, apparently
There are acts which are right, formally

One is justice in the form of alienation
One is oppression in the form of loyalty

But if Veil Keeper⁸⁶ of the signs and the wisdom
Did not reveal the secret of that treasure and fate

It is not readily distributed to just anyone generally
It is only given to companions and friends, particularly

He did not inform me of that secret
Some are prohibited and others are deprived

Praise God that I the evil one and Tajdin
Thanks to the affection of Mem and Zin

Were not punished for so many a sin
And became an aspect of the divine compassion

86- *Veil Keeper God.*

O, friend ! Be either a hearty lover of the good
Or else become a real foe of the good

Both are good and recognise the good
And other than the goodness they know naught

However much you alienate them
They will behave loyally consistently

Beware ! Do not associate the mischievous
Neither be friend or enemy of dogs

For if their friends, you shall be contaminated
If their enemy, you shall be wounded

This is a fate reserved for lovers
This is the road traversed by the truthful

Observe Bekir who was a criminal
And whose actions were totally immoral

Or Tajdin that brave giant
Both killer and combatant

Both were pardoned for their consideration
Both were forgiven for their resolution

Which in one case was the source of re-enforcement
In the other the cause of punishment

This nice truth is symbolism
So try to appreciate this fine witticism

Understand the question, teacher !
And try to estimate the full area, engineer

Is a foe were to share in love
Then would not a friend be regarded ?

And if this affection were extended to the censors
Then how much greater is the superiority of the lovers ?

Especially if the lover was beloved
And demander of truth was demanded

The truth that only He knows is the truth
Absolutely no one but He knows the truth

59. True love

O, exemplary and enticing listener !
O, the measuring and interpreting expounder !

Khani, maddened with the love wine
Sweet to him was that sour wine

He had drunk so much without noticing
That he was no longer aware of talking

Topsy he was, charged with joy
Insane he was, by custom excused

Bad-drinker, drunken and intoxicated
Hence a bad seller and confused

Anything that he says, attribute to passion
It is the tune of the flute, if you listen

That flute is neither permitted nor forbidden
It is not without a tune, but has no curtain

The tune is in Kurdish, Arabic, Deri and Tazi⁸⁷
It is combined in plays and comedy

Some are from the Botan legends
Some are excuses and some are calumnies

The Boti, Mihemmedi and Silivi⁸⁸
Some are pearls, some are gold and silver

Donkey-beads, beads and pearls
Some are transparent and some are dark

Ornamented like children
Brought to the markets and the bazaars

Some are stories and some are anecdotes
Some are forbidden and some are permitted

87- *Deri* and *Tazi* Persian and Arabic dialects respectively.

88- *Boti*, *Mihemmedi* and *Silivi* Kurdish dialects.

Each story has a share of feeling though
Each anecdote has wisdom, if you know

But the purpose of talking and arguing
The aim of discussing and searching

Is to proclaim the beauty of love
And to confirm the perfection of love

Love is a facet of God's mirror
A sun trait, a light possessor

Do not forget true love
O, traveller seeking the shortest way !

It is a fine jewel, a kind of chemistry
Appreciate its value , it is very costly

To a nature that is like unburnished brass
To a heart that is false or calcified

It is a jewel, that will make it to shine
It is a varnish that will make them polished

Anyone who is desired by someone
Either is a love-novice or the loved one

Unique is the reflecting mirror
And never ending is the secret treasure

No one is free from the love effect
Unless one is devoid of taste

Everyone in accordance with one's resolution
Shall expend one's determination

But the majority of the commoners are not acknowledgeable
They do not know what is profitable

Immature, foolish and unwise
Or ascetics, Sufis and Faqis

They are ignorant, illiterate and pauper
Without a guide, a leader or director

Unavoidably becoming sellers of love
Giving their coin for the soiled beauty

Some spending on the worldly living
Some buy with it the End Mansion⁸⁹

Both types become harmful
And deprived of perceptible joy

89- *The End Mansion : the Paradise.*

60. A dream or an image ?

Cupbearer ! Come and tell me, how is it ?
Is this world an image or is it a dream ?

Do not consider it insignificant
Do not picture it as unreal

If the start has the flavour of life
Then the consequence of life is death

In other words this existence has no existence
A fine creation, a pity it is not immortal !

The planets, elements and nature
People, affairs and characters

Together are happily participating
Together are quickly disengaging

The head-threads of these jewels of survival
The capital of the reason of extinction

Some are heavy and some are light
Some are subtle and some are gentle

Though they are the origins and roots
Sometimes they are groans and moans

If the fire extinguishes, the air becomes merely air
If water dries up, the dust still becomes dust

The orbits are like the mills
Permanently in rotation and revolution

The grain in these mills is the human being
The ones who are interred in the soft fine soil

This grain, alternately and in series
Always pours out on the gaping sacks

Anything pouring becomes particles
It breaks up and is ground like flour

They releaven it anew
The mould of the combustible heart

Suffering so much from that policy
Having to be satisfied with the rank of impurity

Being generally neither dead nor alive
According to the dictum « Neither die nor live »

Except for the precious and of pure origin
That is the soul with a good reputation

Whom the farmer raised with special care
The grain he planted particularly

Not until it rots, does it become perishable
Only if it ripens does it become good and pure

But if it ripens and become a cluster
Then it is destined to be threshed for an eater

Going through the mill of the mouth and the chattering of the tongue
Through the saliva of the mouth and the stones of the teeth

So much they are pounded and ground
So much in the city of the body they go round

So much they are beaten by that worker⁹⁰
That they become minute as the flour

In short : After that tormentation
It is subject to the forces' action

One moment gravitating and thro the stomach descending
If costive the contracting force squeezing till aching

Another time, the digestive force digesting
Another time, subjected to the force of swallowing

Then thrown in the stomach oven to bake
Where anything bad is rejected

Also anything soft is raised
And anything hard is lowered

90- *That worker : the Body.*

Then the soft parts separate from the hard
The parts become distinct and spread

The cook of this instinctive oven
This discerner and perfector of cleanliness

Distributes to the body and the organs
Supplying all the corners and places

Then the liver and the glassy heart
Distil the adulterated wine

In short : the wine of life
Becomes distilled as plant

Until, judging from the appearance of these matters
Becoming pleasing to the world of humans

For a time it feeds submerged in a sea of water
Colouring momentarily the blood

Another moment it lines up for combination
it appears in order and regulation

As it is combined like the coral
It becomes the mirror of the ray of soul

What is that soul but the heart of the plant
That heart which is the source of life

While it inhabits the body
Is dumb, and its food is blood

First the seed lies concealed in the farm
Then the fresh plant picks through

And time after time after its conception
That plant shall be watered by blood

If rain does not come down as the munificent's bounty
That grain will become a fruitless palm

The greenery develops from the death of the Righteous
But if rain does come down with abundance

That greenery shall grow rebellious branches
Which presently will bear delicious fruit

When the fruit reaches perfection
It becomes a testimony to Beauty's manifestation

If it is worthy of the glory of the prince
Or as a food in the Almighty's presence

They pick it as a gift
Taking it directly to destination

As it goes it becomes beloved
By the name it has attracted

Such a tree has many a branching
It is very rarely breaking

Should it stay like that, subject to the wind
It will go to the mill of torment

Where it is closely observed
And must be carefully cultured

One time it ripens under the sun of the religion
One time it burns beneath the moon of piety

And it matures, reaching perfection
Until the fruit falls down from the tree

Not until it falls from the summit of glory
Not until it reaches the land of indignity

It shall not become the road traveller
It shall not go to the real squeezer

Following the others unto the road
Hand in hand, rank following rank

That fruit feeds on the perfect nourishment
That delicious morsel thus becomes the sherbet

That fruit, if sweet, is ripe
If bitter and sour, is unripe

Not until it is squeezed and fermented in the great boiler
By the hand of the old wine drinker

Not until it boils in that fermenter
and leaves that great boiler

That is from the manifold qualities
Folding up the manifestations

The story : from the intensity of beauty
In short : with the power of glory

As the essence completely vanishes
Like the incidental, stripping away

The intensity of these manifestations
That burning and that nourishing

As the dust falls

As the steam rises

Purified through rising
Still going to the station divesting

As the essence is stripped of the incidental
It is once more put in the crucible

That crucible maybe narrow
The perishing desert of the mind-opener

It takes the colour of the decanter and tumbler
Though it looks red, it is still not crimson in colour

A sealed nectar that has not reached yet
And to the known place, has not gone yet

As long as it is aware of its existence
It will not feel God's presence

Without the goblet of the Kingly faith
It cannot reach the divine drinking fountain

If it does not perish absolutely
It will not survive truly

Perishing for you means surviving
Surviving for you means meeting
But not by communion and attaching
Perhaps through separation and deliverance
This is the way desire is attained
This is the way a novice, arrives at last
O, Lord ! Would it matter if, just once you removed the veils
And curtains, for those of us who are blind
Enabling us, the impotent, to see
Without a screen, curtain or barrier
That the sea of certainty be waving
We too for a while ca be watching
That this suspicion and doubt, learning and copying
Be replaced by the unclouded perception
That reasons and means vanish absolutely
To be allowed to see you once clearly
In the self-existent God, we have faith
Yet our ability has become a barrier
Again save us from ourselves
O, Lord ! Let us for your sake, know ourselves
As this life and behaviour and abode fold
Are reserved for the novice and the coming
How can we hope for life prospering
If the creator has not destined it from he beginning
Because the evil and its acceptance
Cannot co-exist with the merit and moral excellence
The worshipper who is a hypocrite, shall perish
But the sinner if blessed, shall be absolved
The world is but a shadow of a spectre
The Maker alone is our guide and shader

He casts light so we maybe seeing
He puts on it the veil of struggling

But he has given us the voluntary part
Our self, the impure and the cheap

If that too is unavoidably taken away
We remain to be saved by the graceful truth

Yet it is well for us commoners
It is sufficient for us sinners

To know God rightly through the beauty
Regardless of our defects, illusions and inadequacy

We should fear him in our hearts
Ask the learned to explain our religion

Whatever they say, we should be
Until we vanish and not be

And depend on the mercy of the creator
To spare us in the end from the fire

61. Epilogue and musing with the pen

O, rider who is really a walker !

O, plain page lover !

O, humble and submissive poet !

P, sarcastic and mythical magician !

O, wanderer in the valley of perversion

O, fancier of the call of perfection

O, head-shaven pen of poor colour

Only your name comes of good stock and good character

You darken the face in the name of writing and dotting

Make it a bad name with Bs and Ds lettering

When the writing is Ghubar⁹¹ and fine

It is likely to turn out rather nice

When the writing is a kind of Mashq⁹² closely spaced

Or big as in the Neskh and the Thulth, lettering

It represents only an attempt to simulate beauty

Without glitter, light of perfection

It is better if simple lovers

Avoid too many lines like necklaces

Lining can enhance the beauty of a face

But it should not be the main feature in this case

O, pen ! You too have gone on long enough

This letter suffices, you have been defiling

Even if the speech were preciously expressive

It would be worthless if it were excessive

Don't you see that jewels are valuable

Because they are rare and unobtainable ?

Errors, mistakes, faults and omissions

And the totally unmentionable insubordinations

91- *Ghubar : a type of calligraphy.*

92- *Mashq, Neskh, Thulth : other types of calligraphy.*

You have written without meditation
Who could endure this disposition

Your work no one is welcoming
The appreciation is quite wanting

O, bad, shameless and impudent
Unjust, sinful and insolent

However much your head is sharpened
Nevertheless you wrote faultily

However much your head I shaved
Despite this you behaved sinfully

You passed the limit as Khani
You also attempted to paint as Mani⁹³

Stop wasting time, playing and loitering
Show your repentance for forgetting and erring

Just once repent of your way
Before it is your turn to go away

That gallant, brave and strong hero
The first that learned to bridle its rashness

By releasing it through the finger tips
At once launched a rejoinder

Drawing a sword from the tongue
Arming itself as an opposing chief knight

Disliking reproach, it became petulant
And explored the tongue to voice its retort

Saying : Ahmed⁹⁴ you are but wicked
I only wrote what you said

Without regard if it was good or bad
Whether your instructions were right or wrong

You know too well, imperfect worker
That you are the sayer, the actor and the owner

93- *Mani Chinese painter.*

94- *Ahmed : Khani.*

I was a flute, in the world of fluteland
I was a wine, never in the worshipper's hand

When among the reed you picked me
There was neither a sound nor a call in me

You removed me from my fellows
Deprived me of properties and possessions

You stripped me of my top joints and limbs
First you pierced with the order to be

Then you made me a tanner of love
And finally you pierced my heart with the brand of love

Into my young body you were blowing
Setting my heart moaning and groaning

Blowing pained my heart and head
Anything you blew, that I said

I have no tongue, I am dumb and numb
As a read I have neither soul nor breath

Though I am apparently existing
You are the musician, I am as the flute, nothing

Can the flute say any thing by itself ?
Can the pen spill any ink by itself ?

The writer can transform the pen into a wicked worker
And the musician can make the flute a loud crier

The flute and the pen, the book and the mark
The arrow and the target, the bow and the marksman

Were indicated and doomed by destiny
Before the inscription of the name of Sin

O, Lord ! You know that poor Khani
Resembling the troubled pen

His heart is in your hand, as it should be
His hand has not really been free

Ever since you endowed him with writing ability
Anything you willed, he wrote in entirety

You are the commander, he only obeys the order
And one always excuses the Comelier

Even if you had given him a choice, barely
He would still have submitted to you completely

And with both his knowledge and his writing
He would place himself in your hand, yielding

He knows neither his advantages nor disadvantages
How can he know what is good for him ?

In any case, what you deem pleasing
Being a flute, he must play that way

Both when praising or criticising, O, Lord
You are his entire purpose and desire, O, Lord

But with so repulsive ink
He has blackened entire pages

It is your inscription that is the source of this writing
For thirty years the writing of writings he is lining

Because when he entered this world
The date was one thousand and sixty one⁹⁵

He became forty four this year
That vanguard of the sinner

He is credited with plenty of sins
But not with a penny worth of good deeds

Since your love gave him light at the start
Please give him your blessing at the end

END

95- 1061 hijra = 1650 A.D.

Notes

1. Now ‘Cizre’, the « C » is pronounced « J » as in « James ».
2. The orbit : fate, destiny.
3. Shirin and Perwiz, Ferhad and Layla, Qays, Ramin and Ways, Yousif and Zulaikha, Wamik and Ezra : famous lovers.
4. Sanaani the Pious who fell in love with the daughter of the King of Armenia.
5. Ear-lock, side lock, mole are esteemed as beauty symbols in Kurdistan.
6. Iblis Satan.
7. Mustapha : Mohammed.
8. The first : the pen.
9. The first (existence).
10. Him : Mohammed.
11. Fakhfur : a Chinese Emperor.
12. Bubakir, Omar, Osman and Ali : the four wise Califs successors to Mohammed.
13. Letters tands.
14. The agency of God entrusted to the pious.
15. Could not change our fate.
16. Hatem al-Tai : legendarily generous.
17. Rustem : a hero.
18. Literally, in common idiom : respect our natural Rights
19. Mela Jiziri, Ali Hariri, Fequi Teyran : Famous Kurdish poets.
20. The i in Zin is pronounced as in « been ».

21. Jizir the capital of the principality of Botan. Now a town in South East Turkey.
22. Companion Khalid Ibn Al Waleed.
23. Zin half of Zinedin or Zeinedin.
24. The House Macca ; the Stone the Black Stone ; the Visit Umra, unscheduled Pilgrimage.
25. Ghazanfer : Lion.
26. Newroz Kurdish National Day, beginning of the New Year, 21st of March.
27. The paramount knight of the East : the sun.
28. Literally : wet-nurse.
29. Majnun : lover of Layla. It also means mad.
30. Azra : a girl in love with boy Wamik.
31. The mansion : heaven.
32. The term used is king, not queen.
33. A sheikh, among the Kurds, is a religious figure.
34. Henna is a dye for the body, derived from the shoots of a plant by the same name.
35. Diwan : a collection of poems.
36. Belkis : Queen of Sheba.
37. Asef Barkhiya : King Solomon's minister.
38. The old woman : the season.
39. The House, the Stone, the Place and the Hijra, the Endeavour, the Demand, the pilgrimage and the Umra : Mecca and the ritual acts.
40. Rizwan the gardener or gatekeeper of the paradise, meaning the bridegroom : Tajdin.
41. Belukiya : a notorious trickster.
42. Fakhfor : Emperor of China .
43. Khaqan : King of Turkistan.
44. Qizilbash : Religious sect.

45. The son of Iskander : Mem.
46. The Bilal : the prayer caller of the Prophet Mohammed.
47. The neck with your arm you surround the Tigris is going around the town.
- 48. Zenber, Westan, Nergis, Saqlan, Derwez, Omeri and Meydan : fine places the Tigris is passing through**
49. The gate of happiness : Zin's appartement.
50. The tree of the End where the Prophet Mohammed talked to God : Zin's room.
51. The term used is again the King and not the Queen.
52. The hunter of the worthy news and chaser : the historian.
53. The gazelle : Zin.
54. The bud : Zin.
- 55. The accused : Mem.**
56. The Commander of the procession of the stars : the Sun.
57. The delicate : Zin.
58. The Bishop, the Rook and the Knight : the three brothers.
59. The mischief-maker : Bekir.
60. The orbit destiny.
61. A terminal bed earth.
62. Nekir and Munkir : the two interrogating angels.
63. The Sifi : devout Mem.
64. Aziz : ancient king of Egypt.
65. The Text of the Light : the Koran.
66. The turning wheel : the day.
67. The chief charger the sun ; the grey horse the night ; the white ones the day.
68. That atheist : Bekir.
69. The lions Tajdin and brothers.
70. The braziers : the stars ; the torch : the sun.

71. That cursed, shame-faced hypocrite : Bekir.
72. The two gazelles : the eyes.
73. The Sheikh : Mem.
74. That fairy : Siti.
75. That Venus : Zin.
76. That guide : Mem.
77. The moth : Mem.
78. The candle : Zin.
79. Rizwan's orchard : Heaven.
80. The demon : powerful Tajdin.
81. That pearl : Mem.
82. That snake : Zin.
83. To unroll the rug : to pray.
84. Ahmed : Khani.
85. Veil Keeper : God.
86. Deri and Tazi Persian and Arabic dialects respectively.
87. Boti, Mihemmedi and Silivi : Kurdish dialects.
88. The End Mansion : the Paradise.
89. That worker : the Body.
90. Ghubar : a type of calligraphy.
91. Mashq, Neskh, Thulth : other types of calligraphy.
92. Mani Chinese painter.
93. Ahmed : Khani.
94. Hijra = 1650 A.D.



SALAH SAADALLA
Biographical Notes

- ◆ Born in Zakho on the 15/10/1930, educated there, in Mosul and in England.
- ◆ Developed an early interest in literature and culture generally.
- ◆ At the secondary School in Mosul, he was president of the Debating Society, editor of its wall-magazine *Al-Hayat Life*, started publishing with a short story entitled *The Lottery Ticket*, which won the first prize in a competition carried out among Mosul students.
- ◆ **Writing in Arabic, Kurdish and English:**
Has written several books including : *Kurdistan* - in English - and *On the Kurdish Language* - in Arabic.
- ◆ **Translated, from English to Arabic:**
 1. *The March of the Ten Thousand*, Rex Warner - Xenophon's
 2. *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, Hemingway
 3. *The Essential Tension*, Thomas Khun
 4. *The Three Worlds, Culture and World Development*, Peter Worsley (in association with a colleague)
- ◆ **Translated from Arabic to Kurdish:**
- *The Epic of Gilgamesh*.
- ◆ Published numerous articles, broadcasts and gave T.V. interviews on Kurdish cultural matters.

- ◆ Former President of the Kurdish Cultural Society in Kirkuk
- ◆ Member of Iraqi Writers Union
- ◆ Member of a Committee of experts coining Kurdish Scientific terms in the Kurdish Commission of the Iraqi Scientific Academy
- ◆ An Engineer by profession.
- ◆ Died on 18/10/2007 in Hawler (Arbil), Kurdistan.
- ◆ Burried in Zakho, his home town.

Acknowledgement

The Sketches are drawn by the Kurdish artist Muhammed Arif. I am most grateful to him for consenting so generously to include them, as illustrations, in this translation. They are, in fact, published for the first time.

Salah Saadalla

I would like to thank all our friends who made the realisation of this book possible, namely our dear friend Muayad Taib Manager of Spirez publications, Dr. Curd Jamchid Bedirkhan, Mir-haj Mistefa and my friends of Baghdad International School.

Sinemkhan Bedirkhan

by Ahmed Khani (1650-1707)

Mem and Tin

Translated by Salah Saadalla

Of perfection Khani is devoid
The field of perfection he saw as void
That is acting not with expertise and ability
Perhaps due to tribalism and partiality
In short : stubbornly, albeit out of injustice
He embarked on this unusual novelty
Pouring limpid drink to the dreg
As the pearl of the Kurdish tongue
Bringing it into order and regularity
Suffering hardship fort he sake of the public
So that people might not say: "The Kurds
Have no origin, knowledge and base
Various nations have their own books
With the sole exception of Kurds"
Also the foresighted may not say: "The Kurds
Do not make love one of their aims
That they are neither desiring nor desired
That they are neither lovers nor beloved
That they have no share of love
Neither real nor metaphoric."
The Kurds do not lack much perfection.
They are orphans lacking opportunities.
In the whole they are not so ignorant and uneducated.
Perhaps they are humble and unprotected.

